

**Exploration in Language Didactics and in Teachers'
Pedagogical Thinking**

**Secondary School Language Teachers' Conceptions
and Methods of Teaching English as
a Second Language in Cameroon**

Rita Waye Johnson Longfor

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to describe, analyse and interpret secondary school language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching English as a second language in Cameroon, the justification of their methods and how they scaffolded their students' study processes. This was investigated through the following three research questions: (1) What are the main language teaching methods of Cameroon teachers of English as a second language? (2) In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language justify the language teaching methods they use? (3) In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language scaffold their students' study processes?

The data were gathered from five Cameroon teachers of English as a second language from six classes (Form 1–5) in three schools through participant observation. 1) Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the five teachers after lesson observations, 2) a focus group interview was conducted with six teachers of English, 3) a national pedagogic inspector for English second language teaching at the Cameroon Ministry of Education was also interviewed, and 4) informal discussions were held with the participants in order to get a better view of the context and participants. In addition to this, a number of documents were consulted: the Cameroon syllabus/scheme of work, a ministerial circular defining the objectives and organisation of bilingualism at secondary schools in Cameroon, and professional development objectives of the Cameroon English Language and Literature Teachers Association (CAMELTA). The field work period lasted from February 2010 until June 2010. The data were analysed through qualitative content analysis methods.

The findings of the present study indicate that the five teachers' main language teaching methods were not in line with communicative language teaching methodology since the English second language teaching was highly teacher-centred and the emphasis was on grammar and examinations. Discussions on meaningful language input, functional and skill language learning theories, however, pointed to their awareness of communicative principles. The justification for the use of a non-communicative approach focused on restrictions in the school context, the home context and restrictions coming from the Cameroon Ministry of Education. These contextual restrictions nevertheless affected the five teachers' teaching and their conceptions of ESL on personal and professional levels. However, as this study indicates, justifications underpinned by theory and not drawing solely on personal maxims and opting for the best of poor alternatives can still have a positive impact on the language teaching situation.

In everyday language teaching, scaffolding English second language students was an important consideration and the students' study processes was scaffolded in many ways. The analysed data show encouraging signs of English second language teachers' willingness to engage in scaffolding within lesson frameworks, provide a safe supportive study environment, inquire into and pay attention to students' previous knowledge, but the results also reflect that the knowledge of when to fully withdraw scaffolding to help the student gain independence was still undeveloped.

The highly examination-oriented environment, the teachers' practical approach to teaching English as a second language and the non-support of the Cameroon Ministry of Education in the professional development of language teachers are some of the current problems in the teaching of English as a second language. The findings of this study suggest that the Cameroon Ministry of Education should play a more active role in promoting the didactic teaching–studying–learning process of English as a second official language in Cameroon and in changing the conceptions of how to teach this language. The findings emphasise the need for designing professional development courses, providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on and discuss their teaching experiences and for redefining their role as professionals.

Keywords: English as a second language; communicative language teaching; language teachers' pedagogical justifications; scaffolding; teaching–studying–learning process; didactics; professional development

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Kielididaktiikka ja opettajien pedagoginen ajattelu

Tutkimus englantia toisena kielenä opettavien kielenopettajien käsityksistä ja opetusmenetelmistä
Kamerunissa

Tiivistelmä

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli kuvata, analysoida ja tulkita kamerunilaisten englannin opettajien käsityksiä ja opetusmenetelmiä, menetelmien perusteluja ja miten he tukevat (scaffold) oppilaiden opiskeluprosesseja. Tavoitteeseen pyrittiin vastaamalla tutkimuskysymyksiin, jotka ovat (1) Mitkä ovat kamerunilaisten englannin opettajien ensisijaiset kielenopetusmenetelmät?, (2) Miten opettajat perustelevat menetelmien käyttöä? ja (3) Miten kamerunilaiset englannin opettajat tukevat oppilaidensa opiskeluprosesseja?

Aineisto kerättiin havainnoimalla viiden englantia toisena kielenä opettavan kamerunilaisopettajan kuutta luokkaa (Form 1–5) kolmessa koulussa. 1) Puolistrukturoidut haastattelut tehtiin kunkin viiden opettajan kanssa tuntihavainnointien jälkeen, 2) kohderyhmähaastatteluun osallistui kuusi englannin opettajaa, 3) Kamerunin opetusministeriön pedagogista englannin kielen opetuksen tarkastajaa haastateltiin, ja 4) osallistujien kesken käytiin epämuodollisia keskusteluja tarkemman kuvan saamiseksi osallistujista ja kontekstista. Lisäksi käytettiin apuna asiakirjoja: Kamerunin opetussuunnitelma, ministeriön kiertokirje, jossa määrätään kaksikielisyyden tavoitteet ja rakenne Kamerunin kouluissa sekä Kamerunin englannin kielen ja kirjallisuuden opettajien liiton (CAMELTA) ammatillisen kehittymisen tavoitteet. Tutkimuksen kenttävaihe kesti helmikuusta 2010 kesäkuuhun 2010. Aineisto analysoitiin laadullisen sisältöanalyysin menetelmin.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että viiden tutkitun opettajan kielenopetusmenetelmät eivät olleet kommunikatiivisen kielenopetusmenetelmän mukaisia, vaan englannin opetus oli voimakkaasti opettajakeskeistä, ja opetuksen painopiste oli kieliopissa ja kokeissa. Keskusteluista, joissa käsiteltiin mielekästä kielisyytettä, funktionaalisia ja taidonoppimisteorioita, ilmeni kuitenkin, että opettajat tunsivat kommunikatiivisen opetuksen periaatteet. Opettajat perustelivat ei-kommunikatiivisen menetelmän käyttöä koulun ja kodin ja Kamerunin opetusministeriön asettamilla rajoituksilla. Nämä kontekstuaaliset rajoitukset vaikuttivat viiden opettajan opetukseen ja heidän käsityksiinsä englannista toisena kielenä henkilökohtaisella ja ammatillisella tasolla. Tämä tutkimus osoittaa kuitenkin, että opettajien perustelut eivät perustu yksinomaan opettajien henkilökohtaisiin maksiimeihin, vaan pohjautuvat teoriaan, mitä voidaan pitää myönteisenä kielenopetuksen kannalta.

Oppilaiden tukeminen (scaffolding) englannin opiskelussa oli kiinteä osa päivittäistä työtä, ja oppilaiden opiskelua tuettiin monin tavoin. Tuloksista ilmenee rohkaisevia merkkejä kamerunilaisten englannin opettajien halukkuudesta tarjota oppituntien aikana oikea-aikaista tukea oppilaille, tarjota turvallinen ja tukea antava opiskeluympäristö, aktivoida ja käyttää hyväksi oppilaiden taustatietoa opiskelun tukena. Tulokset osoittavat myös, että opettajilla ei ole vielä selvää tietoa oikeasta ajankohdasta, jolloin tuen antamisesta tulee luopua ja näin tukea oppilaan itsenäistymistä oppijana.

Voimakas kokeskeisyys, opettajien käytännöllinen lähestymistapa englannin opettamiseen toisena kielenä ja Kamerunin opetusministeriön puuttuva tuki opettajien ammatillisessa kehittämisessä ovat englannin opetuksen ajankohtaisia ongelmia. Tämän tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että Kamerunin opetusministeriön tulisi olla aktiivisesti edistämässä didaktista opettaminen-opiskelu-oppiminen

-prosessia englannin kielen opetuksessa Kamerunissa ja muuttamassa käsityksiä siitä miten englantia toisena kielenä opetetaan. Tulosten mukaan tarvitaan ammatillisen kehittymisen kursseja, tilaisuuksia, joissa opettajat voivat reflektoida ja keskustella opetuskokemuksistaan ja uudelleen määritellä tehtävänsä opetuksen ammattilaisina.

Avainsanat: englantia toisena kielenä; kommunikatiivinen kielenopetus; kielenopettajien pedagoginen ajattelu; scaffolding; opettaminen-opiskelu-oppiminen -prosessi; didaktiikka; ammatillinen kehittyminen

Prologue

From Cameroon to Finland, an Autobiographical Reflection

The origins of this doctoral thesis derive principally from my own experience of learning English as a second language, from being a student teacher in training and from working as a teacher of English language and literature for six years. Reflecting on pedagogical concerns in English Language teaching brings me back to the time when I was studying in the Higher Teacher's Training College in Cameroon for a secondary and high school teacher diploma. I had trained for five years and soon after my graduation would become a qualified teacher of English Language and Literature with a prospect of full time employment but decided to try something quite different. I moved from Cameroon to the University of Helsinki in October 2006 to begin a PhD in Education. My friends and family were shocked at my decision to move to Finland to study. Not only was it (back then) an unpopular destination for most Cameroon students, most people knew little or nothing about Finland in Cameroon, not to mention its location. Why the change? What were the reasons for venturing into this little known destination? I would like to invite you, the reader, to now join me on a journey back to my early life.

How did it all begin?

Shortly after my graduation from High school in 1999, the thought of becoming a teacher was very exciting for one reason: I always dreamed to become a 'colleague of the noble profession' a catch phrase in teachers' social gatherings. Even though I loved teaching, I never thought of English teaching, because I enjoyed Literature and History better than English. How, then, did I find my way into language teaching?

In Cameroon, teacher education subjects are organised in pairs. For example, if one wants to become a teacher of English language, one must teach literature and candidates must succeed in both subjects in official examinations. This is same for geography/history, physics/chemistry, economics/mathematics, French/English etc. I was very passionate about History but had to let this pass because it was paired with Geography which I did not have on offer in the high school.¹ I turned to another favourite—Literature. I could cope with this pair because I did not lose all of my favourite subjects, so I worried less about the English Language.

My Time at the Training College in Cameroon

The way I was taught exerted a great impact on my conception of teaching English as a second language (ESL). Teaching ESL for examination success, with emphasis on the mastery of the four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) was

¹ In the high school there are science sections and arts sections. For example the arts sections could combine History, Literature, and Economics/, French, Literature, History/, History, Geography, Economics/etc. and students would choose from the list with little or no option for the subjects in each section.

probably the most common approach to teaching ESL in Cameroon for years, and is still practised in many situations today. English Language was more of a challenge in my secondary school years, for the simple reason that it was so boring with too much emphasis on accuracy and assessments. It was just another school subject and like all other school subjects I had to read the course book and get a good grade in the assessments. When I finally became a teacher in training, I kept wondering if teacher education could make English Language more exciting. Unfortunately, I found myself keeping wondering what was going on with English Language teaching, and I consequently focused more on passing tests because once again language learning was no different from secondary school days—very boring. It felt a bit strange that some Second language courses turned into notes-taking sessions with little or no time to discuss the relevance of second languages for the students we were going to teach.

In fact, I could not think of any other role for the language teacher than teaching grammar, essay writing, reading and listening comprehension. This was also true for the teaching practice period. Most, if not all, of my discussions with the teacher trainer were focused on the use of the textbook, how to draw a good lesson plan and above all how to set examinations. At this stage, I carefully followed instructions on how to use textbooks because compliance with this would guarantee a good report during my own final evaluation. I do not miss those teaching practice days when some teachers just deliberately became lazy and delegated their textbook and the whole class to student teachers, instead of collaborating with them. This made the teaching practice period more of a nightmare and a sigh of relief came when we would finally go back to the training colleges for our final evaluation. Therefore it was just an exercise for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining a diploma for teaching, not a time to transform the theories I learned into practice. It became clear then that it was not enough to follow the textbooks.

In my personal professional praxis and reflection on teaching, studying and learning, I often asked myself: what kind of ESL teacher am I? What are my own professional development needs? And what kinds of beliefs shape my role, classroom practices and relationship with my students? Unable to find answers to such vexing concerns, I began to think deeply about ESL in Cameroon.

I still think Literature shaped my values for awareness and to critically interpret texts and my role in this society. In Literature lessons, I read Michel Foucault, Homi Bhabha, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Richard Wright, Ayi Kwei Armah and other contemporary thinkers whose critical perspectives influenced my thinking in many ways. I definitely knew the kind of Literature teacher I wanted to become, but this was not true for the English Language.

I am a product of such a system wherein school subjects are learned for pragmatic reasons like passing examinations; consequently the teaching of subjects in a fragmented manner is mostly condoned not contested (Sung, 2007). The extensive focus on examinations and numerous successes in them over the years appeared to be no problem until I moved to the University of Helsinki for further study in 2006.

What? Where is your theory?

A big problem for me for me was the realisation that studying to pass examinations did not necessarily mean mastery of educational skills (or ownership of learning). My personal experience proved this. As soon as I arrived at the University of Helsinki-Department of Applied Sciences of Education², I was suddenly bewildered by the culture of education imbued by the philosophy of learner autonomy. Theoretical understandings acquired in my study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) proved sufficient to pursue postgraduate studies but I could not easily follow the current theoretical emphasis. I discovered that there was so much I needed to learn in terms of theory, the professional and pedagogical development of teachers. Second Language Acquisition theorists were rarely mentioned, given very scant attention back home, which became a big problem in a new foreign institution. I thought this theoretical focus was intimidating and confusing, and somehow I regretted my decision to start a PhD in English education. I considered myself a beginner but engaged in a frantic yearlong effort to update my understanding of the teachers' pedagogical thinking and role in the teaching–studying–learning process. I read voraciously works of second language theorists Vygotsky, Chomsky, Krashen, Lantolf, Kramsch, Richards and Rodgers, David Nunan, Rod Ellis etc. and perspectives on second language teaching for the first year recommended to me as a programme of independent study.

During this opportunity to acquire some distance from the classroom and while being confronted by new approaches and challenges, I found that my personal beliefs about teacher education and particularly my views about ESL teacher professional development in Cameroon began to evolve. A further step in this evolutionary process was pursuing a more intensive study of teachers' conceptions of teaching ESL, their methods and justifications in Cameroon secondary schools, not only because of the intrinsic interest, but because of the potential value such a study might have for the teachers themselves, teacher educators and also for wider reforms as inspired by the policy of *Official language bilingualism*.

Apart from engaging in acquiring a more solid understanding of the role of theory for ESL teaching, I also had to adapt myself to the culture of learner empowerment, a process that took time, effort and attention. My daily social life and study encountered one challenge after another and I had to proceed cautiously so as not to make a fool of myself or to offend anyone. Looking back over my diary entries at that time, I realized how confused I often was, how strong my emotions were, how categorical my judgements were, how much I wrote about Cameroon teaching culture and learning, how many questions I asked, how much I wondered about myself. The process I was going through was unlike anything I had ever experienced. I had no frame of reference for these experiences. A victim of a heavily oriented examination system, and having been a powerless learner, I was ill prepared to the degree of adjustment I had to undergo or the inevitable culture shock. I was trying to determine how to adjust to the Finnish system of education and establish myself somewhere on a continuum between an uncritical, unreflect-

² The name of this department was later changed back to the Department of Teacher Education following the university reforms in 2009.

ive examination oriented teacher/postgraduate Cameroon student on the one end, on the other hand, rapid and deep-going assimilation into the teacher/learner empowered Finnish system of education, leaving my own country's educational system and practices behind.

I began this research report with my experiences as a language learner and ESL teacher in training for a number of reasons. Above all, I want to understand the importance of teaching ESL and the role of the ESL language teacher as a professional in assisting students to become builders and reflective users of second languages. I want to re-emphasise that English teaching, whether it occurs in a foreign or second language context, inside or outside a classroom, through books or through people, can enhance, amplify and strengthen in many ways a human being's mental, social and interactive capacity to work, communicate and to act (Harjanne & Tella, 2008). Every teacher has her³ personal didactics and way to relate to language teaching. In the final analysis, we as language teachers we also have experiences of language learning and teaching. The way we teach springs from our histories as language learners and our own understandings of ourselves. Bringing my own story to light can help me see how to foster better teaching practices for students in ESL classes.

Therefore the research-oriented Teacher Education Department with its emphasis on theoretical and professional development of teachers opened up a new interest for me and made me reflect on ESL education and professionalism in Cameroon.

³ From now on I refer to teachers as feminine.

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1 Introduction

This introduction will give readers an overall picture of the current study. It includes the background, the aim, followed by an overview of the research report.

1.1 Background to the Study

It is a challenge for teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL) to critically read, observe, analyse and question their teaching methods, especially for those in non-native English speaking countries. This is mainly due to factors such as the rapid changes in the discipline of second and foreign language teaching and research, characterised by the proliferation of new approaches and methods in the twentieth century (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Littlewood, 2011; Hinkel, 2011), insights gained from classroom research, the changing role of teachers, and the inherent complexity of language teaching. The use of contextually relevant teaching methods in EFL/ESL is perceived by many researchers as a source of information to guide teachers in the art and science of Foreign/Second language teaching and learning. Nevertheless, according to Sung (2007) there are language teachers in non-English speaking countries who have conformed to the practice of teaching language in a fragmented manner for a long time. This may be due to the easy availability of quick-fix teaching methods using commercially developed instructional material and of test software to raise students' test scores for them to have a better chance of future job security.

Cortazzi and Jin (2011) add that not only are the teachers using more quick-fix teaching methods, but the need for educational systems to re-define themselves in these rapidly changing economic and technological conditions highlights communication skills worldwide, which influences conceptions of ESL teaching. However, many educators and researchers in both L1 (First Language) and L2 (Second Language) (Kramsch, 1993; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Savignon, 2005; Johnson, 2006; Yoon, 2007), have recognised the importance of creating public spaces that make visible how L2 teachers come to understand their experiences in this complex phenomenon of teaching a second language and how they co-construct and justify the knowledge that informs their practice. Therefore, in response to the constantly evolving socio-political and contextual factors affecting second language teaching and the ever expanding needs of second language users, various governments through teacher education programmes and research have taken concrete measures to overcome common problems.

It is against this background that the present study set out to describe, analyse and interpret secondary school language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching ESL in Cameroon, the justification of their teaching methods and how they scaffold their students' study processes. As scholars (Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Littlewood, 2011) urge that special attention be focused on supporting wider participation in the 'cosmopolitan conversation' about language pedagogy, the purpose of this present study is to make a modest contribution to the on-going dia-

logue and to create new understandings of existing challenges in ESL teaching by including the perspectives of Cameroon teachers of English as a second language.

1.2 Research Aim

The main research aim of the current study is to describe, analyse and interpret secondary school language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching English as a second language in Cameroon. The study aims to explore how Cameroon language teachers describe their work in direct relationship to observed classroom practices—the ideas and images language teachers use in their teaching, the underlying rationales or justification of their teaching methods and how they scaffold or support students' study processes.

The teachers whose conceptions, methods and scaffolding strategies are studied here teach students most of whom do not have English as their mother tongue but live and attend bilingual schools in the capital city—Yaoundé. The students speak French as their mother tongue or as their first foreign language. Some of them use several languages of wider communication (see Table 7). They study English in the classroom and this language is readily available outside the classroom since English is the second official language of Cameroon. Therefore, the study of English in the classroom and the environment outside the language classroom forms the socio-cultural context of the current research.

To date, much of the work on language studies in Cameroon has focused on bilingualism. For example, there are several studies describing and evaluating the policy of official language bilingualism in Cameroon (see Bobda, 2004; Anchimbe, 2005; Ayafor, 2005; Kouega, 2005; Kouega, 2007). Although studies exist about teachers and English pedagogy in Cameroon (Tchombe, n.d.; Kuchah, n.d), there are no research results related to teachers' justification of their methods and scaffolding students study processes at the secondary level. However, context-appropriate English language pedagogy for primary schools has been studied (see Kuchah, n.d.).

On the surface, teachers (especially language teachers) appear to be eclectic in their teaching, methods and in practice. Over time they build up practical skills/knowledge that involve dealing with a complex array of classroom work. (Shulman, 1987; Meijer, 2001) This knowledge is strongly influenced by teachers' theoretical frameworks derived from professional training and, particularly, from experiences as both students from early childhood onwards and during their career as teachers (Breen et al., 2001). Not surprisingly, therefore, research in teacher professionalism and in teacher thinking and action (an international trend) recognises that research is not limited to studying what teachers *do*, but is committed to understanding *why* and *how* teachers think and feel about their work and the cultural contexts in which their work is imbedded. Uncovering these different aspects of teachers' work is a difficult undertaking. However, there are four reasons why this kind of undertaking is important:

- This perspective facilitates the recognition and examination of teachers' conceptions (ideas and actions they use to organise their teaching) and their

role in shaping what goes on in the language classroom as a useful step in supporting teachers' professional development.

- The world-wide demand for English has created a vast demand for quality language teaching, and professionalism of English as a second or foreign language. Much of this impetus for change comes about as national boundaries have weakened under the influence of globalisation, and more and more countries have felt an intense need for English as the medium of international communication—in fact, a bridge to international success that everyone wants to cross.
- Any innovation in classroom practice—from adoption of a new technique or textbook to the implementation of a new curriculum—has to be accommodated within the teacher's own framework of teaching principles. Greater awareness of such frameworks across a group of teachers within a particular situation can inform curriculum policy in relation to any innovation that may be plausible in that situation (Breen et al., 2001).
- Such principles may contribute frameworks for language pedagogy emerging directly from classroom work in a range of different teaching situations that would generate grounded alternatives to the 'accepted wisdom' of language teaching methodology emanating from certain academic traditions or institutions or from writers and textbooks at some distance from actual contexts of teaching (Phillipson, 1992; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Pennycook, 2010).

It is fair, then, to say that both from a contemporary and a historical perspective, second/foreign teaching–studying–learning research has always been an important practical concern.

1.3 Overview of the study

Figure 1 details the research design of the current study. It also presents an overview of the research report giving the reader an overall idea of the theoretical components to be expounded in subsequent chapters as well as the research task, questions and the methodology of the current study.

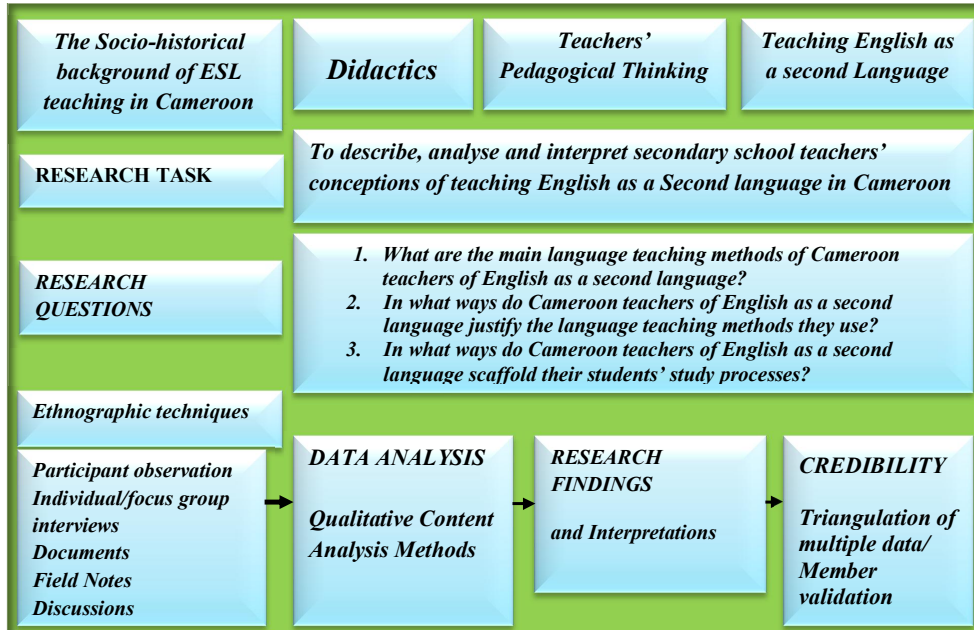


Figure 1. The research design of the study

In the following chapter I will move to one of the basic concepts.

2 Didactics

This study falls into the subject didactics of teaching English as a second language. Therefore, it is essential to provide sufficient background information and theoretical assumptions about teaching in general using the concepts of general didactics. The discussion of these concepts will facilitate understanding the theories and methods that inform the decision to use a didactic approach in this study.

2.1 Definition of Didactics and Pedagogy

Didactics is usually considered to deal with the science of teaching. It is often divided in different ways—descriptive and normative. Uljens (1997) suggests that as a *normative* study of teaching, didactics relates both to giving teaching instructions drawn from the aims and goals of the curriculum. As a *descriptive* science of teaching, didactics refers to research on teaching. It must be noted, however, that descriptive didactics is not free from normativity, which concerns the axiological issues beyond the scientific theory, such as the knowledge interest represented by the theory (Uljens, 1997, p. 52).

Didactics is also the science of the teaching–studying–learning process that is culturally and historically situated and a theoretical framework for studying this process Uljens (1997). Tella (2002) extends the meaning of didactics as: (1) a domain of science which studies teaching; (2) a science and a study whose target is teaching, studying and learning and (3) a doctrine which searches for teaching, studying and learning practices in order to achieve the set learning aims and goals by means of teaching and studying. In its broadest definition, however, didactics refers to all kinds of research on teaching or, more precisely, on the teaching–studying–learning process (Kansanen, 1995). In other words, didactics investigates and develops the aims, content matter and working practices of the teaching–studying–learning process. Central to the idea of didactics is therefore that teaching, studying and learning form an integral entity, in which each of the three components support each other (Harjanne & Tella, 2007).

From the perspective of the current study, didactics is contextually linked to the society and those institutions, such as schools, that have set specific aims and goals for their education. The aims and goals set in the curriculum regulate the degree of freedom to act in this context and define the student–teacher interaction. Such interaction becomes normative in nature as Kansanen (2002) has argued. However, an understanding of the context of the teaching–studying–learning process is critical, as context mediates teachers' cognitions and practice, which may lead to changes in their cognitions or create tension between cognitions and classroom practices (Borg, 2006).

Important in the concept of didactics is the view that the teaching–studying–learning process be looked at as a totality, taking all possible factors into consideration especially in research. However, Kansanen (2002) observes that it is certainly not possible to include all empirical viewpoints in the research design of a study. Additionally, he remarks that the research framework is totally different when the

process is looked at as a whole, because the instructional process as a totality has usually been examined in such a way that the various parts of the process were constantly considered in relation to each other in terms of their interaction, wherein research initiatives tried to discover how participants (teachers and students) interact in various ways. Kansanen (2002) also claims that research on teaching has changed so much that it is difficult to find reports which treat the process of instruction as a totality; rather, it is easier to find research reports dealing only with learning and others dealing only with teaching. As far as the current study is concerned, it is assumed that the didactic teaching–studying–learning (TSL) process requires a holistic view of the roles of different actors, the teachers/students within such a conceptual framework, the historical and cultural context of ESL study.

While didactics is a concept with educational potential, it has been notoriously difficult to use and has not become widespread (Kansanen, 2009), because its use was limited to German-speaking countries or to countries having cultural relations with Germany. As a result, *Didaktik* is nowadays in use in Central Europe and in the Scandinavian countries, but it is practically unknown at least in English or French-speaking countries in the area of education (Kansanen, 1995). Adding to its complexities this term can be found in dictionaries with quite different meanings and theoretical conceptions in use, and that ‘didactics’ often includes negative or pejorative connotations in Anglo-American educational parlance and language use. Kansanen (2009) points out that the different approach to the same area of interest results from tensions in the cultural relations between the German-speaking and the English-speaking worlds. During the twentieth century, the two World Wars created special political circumstances that also separated the researchers in the field from each other.

Nonetheless, there is a recent and growing interest in promoting a discussion between the representatives of the Anglo-American, Nordic⁴ and the continental European tradition concerning research on teaching, curriculum and didactics with the increasing number of publications (see e.g. Kansanen, 1995; Uljens, 1997; Hamilton, 1999; Harjanne & Tella, 2007; Kansanen, 2009) providing a theme to which academics return time after time as Kansanen (2002, p. 431) concludes ***“It is unrealistic to proceed as if the concept of didactics does not exist”***.

One way of looking at didactics is from the perspective of different subjects. In foreign/second language teaching, we usually speak of language didactics, which in this thesis plays a major role. Didactics in this study focuses on research on teaching, which can be referred to as the general didactics; however, didactics differentiates into many special viewpoints on the action level which requires that the teacher and practitioner researcher establish some common approach to the instructional process. When speaking of English language as a school subject, the subject-didactics aspect is emphasised and there is a certain difference as to the dimension of generality since subject-based *didaktik* is more evident when a curriculum is organised according to subjects as Kansanen (2002) has emphasised. In

⁴ There is an extensive literature on general didactics and subject didactics in Sweden and Norway but the author has not been able to utilise them due to the language barrier (e.g. Gundem, 1975; Marton et al., 1986).

line with this emphasis, second language didactics as part of educational didactics (research) should aim at disseminating findings based on the design and implementation of language curricula.

It is important to acknowledge that the concept of second/foreign language didactics has widened to cover particularly all the three components of the teaching–studying–learning (TSL) process in a profound continental European meaning. This also means that research is now focused on the different forms and aspects of pedagogical activity and on the different roles of different actors. At the same time, curricula are understood not only as instructions of planning, implementing and assessing teaching, but, more and more, also as thinking that is knowledge-strategic and future-oriented (Harjanne & Tella, 2007). Kansanen (2009) also reminds us that in addition to the general aspects of teaching and studying, school subjects differ according to their special characteristics which lead to pedagogical decisions that are of a subject-*didaktik* character.

The widened concept of language didactics therefore comprises the complex and multifaceted teaching reality of the foreign/second language in terms of planning, implementation and reflective evaluation of all the issues in question. Since the TSL process consists essentially of purposiveness, context, interaction, content and method, it is therefore important to realise that these aspects of pedagogical activity interact constantly with each other. As the terms *pedagogy* and *didactics* are sometimes used in the same meaning, it seems pertinent to refer to some educational objectives in order to further clarify the concept of didactics.

Pedagogy is frequently referred to in professional articles and sometimes considered less difficult than ‘didactics’. Pedagogy originates from Greek and Latin. In the Greek definition a pedagogue refers to a servant or man who guards and supervises a child, and the Latin *paedagogus* refers to a slave who looked after a child and supervised a child or boy at home, but also accompanied him to and from school (Watkins & Mortimore, 1999, cited in Harjanne & Tella, 2007). Hamilton (1999), notes that in ancient Greece pedagogues took care of the education of pre-puberty-aged boys. According to Van Manen (1999, cited in Kansanen, 2003, p. 222) ‘pedagogy means the study and practice of actively distinguishing what is appropriate and what is less appropriate for young people... what are appropriate ways of teaching and giving assistance to young children and people’. However, Kansanen (2003) expands the concept of pedagogy by arguing that it also includes content, context, actors, and goals and it is usually guided by the curriculum. Pedagogy means constant decision making regarding teaching, which requires pedagogical thinking from the teacher.

Though the term pedagogy is widely used, it may be equally regarded as a complicated concept, as ‘the word pedagogy has gradually turned into a fashion word and lost its original meaning, its connection to children is overlooked and it is linked to rather strange contexts dealing with many kinds of unusual phenomena in the margins of educational context’ (Van Manen, 1999, cited in Kansanen, 2003, p. 223). In this study, however, pedagogy is used as a synonym for didactics as both terms are closely related. Didactics, however, focuses more directly on the teaching–studying–learning process, while pedagogy may cover a broader range of educational aspects.

Discussions about the relationship between didactics and pedagogy have been aptly called *Didaktik Renaissance* by Uljens (1997). Opinions have differed among researchers in continental Europe and the Anglo-Saxon worlds for many years (see e.g. Uljens, 1997; Hamilton, 1999; Harjanne & Tella, 2007; Kansanen, 2009) as they suggest a *rapprochement* or combining the promising areas of both concepts in future research. It seems easier applying the commonly accepted and less pejorative term—pedagogy.

According to Hamilton (1999, p.135) ‘the European discourse of didactics is very close to the Anglo–American discourse of pedagogics. Only their language divides them’. Kansanen (2002) agrees, and notes that the North European terminology ‘didactics’ refers to research on teaching and in the Anglo–American terms to research on the teaching–studying–learning process. In order to explicate the difficulty encountered in translating this concept across research communities, Kansanen explains that Nordics and Germans have special terms (*opetusoppi*, *undervisningslära*, *Unterrichtslehre*) but in English they must use such a clumsy expression as ‘pedagogy in the area of the teaching–studying–learning process’ or perhaps the ‘art of teaching’.

A useful and clarifying overview of the differences between the Anglo–American and continental European approach to research on teaching (didactics) is explained in the following quotation from Kansanen (1995b, p. 348):

In the American literature of research on teaching, the problems of teaching and learning in general are usually held together without any theoretical model building. Attention is paid to the methodological problems, and there the various background principles can be seen. In German educational literature, didactic problems define an independent sub-discipline of education which is really quite the same as general education, however with its own point of view. The area of *Didaktik* is mainly larger than educational psychology and it includes much philosophical and theoretical thinking. In German literature, *Didaktik* and educational psychology are clearly separate fields with different representatives. The situation in Great Britain and the US is quite the contrary; the same people are working in this common area. Naturally, there are differences as to the importance given to some aspects of the problems, e.g. the role of learning in the teaching process.

In other words, at the intersection between education and psychology, we can find an area where the aspects common to didactics and educational psychology are found, and in countries where educational psychology and didactics are sub-disciplines, educational psychology considers mainly the areas of learning, development, intelligence and motivation. Therefore, it can be concluded that educational psychology deals with problems that are mainly without any specific context, such as institution or school or a subject matter. The more we specify the problems with the help of a context, the more questions that we consider in didactics come to the fore. (Kansanen, 2009).

In order not to consider the didactic concept as overly limited to the context of the classroom, German proponents (Appel, 1990; Glöckel, 1990; Meyer, 1997 cited by Kansanen, 2009) increasingly use the parallel concept of school pedagogy (*Schulpädagogik*), which refers to a broader context and includes attention to neighbouring sciences such as social studies and politics. Furthermore, the ex-

panded notion of foreign/second language didactics as a transdisciplinary science and all the conceptions of language, language proficiency, language teaching, language studying and learning associated with it can be seen as affordances which provide different language teachers and teacher educators with different opportunities to act depending on what they regard as relevant and depending on how they then act and react to them. Moreover, foreign/ second language teaching is part of an extensive societal development (Harjanne & Tella, 2007) because language teaching should be understood to be an increasing growing contact with extensive societal structures, such as national educational systems, the growth of human cultural capital — also for the benefit of national economy — national identity and the promotion of equality as Byram (2002) has argued.

Thus didactics becomes a suitable theoretical framework for studying ESL teaching as studies (Sung, 2007; Yoon, 2007; Gatbonton, 2008) continuously establish the relationship between classroom practices and socio-political contexts outside the classroom. Table 1 presents a summary of the main interpretations of didactics and pedagogy and how these terms are understood in the Cameroon educational context.

Table 1. Main interpretations of the concepts of didactics and pedagogy (based on Tella & Harjanne, 2007, with the Cameroon addition by the author)

	<i>German</i>	<i>Anglo-American</i>	<i>Cameroon</i>
<i>Didactics</i>	Related to theory	Not used; instead, curriculum, teaching methods, pedagogy; related to educational psychology; focusing on empiricism	<i>Didactique des disciplines</i> (teaching)
<i>Pedagogy</i>	Education and teaching	No established meaning; since the 1970s, more generally accepted; close to the European concept of didactics	<i>Sciences of education</i> (educational psychology), emphasis on general pedagogy and learning

In summarising the main interpretations of didactics in the German and Scandinavian contexts versus its interpretations in Anglo–American educational parlance, it is also possible to comment on their position in Cameroon’s educational system. It is evident that pedagogy is a more widely-used term than didactics. This usage also applies to the context of Cameroon, and as explained in chapter 5, the educational system of Cameroon has been influenced by the British and French systems of education during and after independence from these colonial regimes. Most teacher training colleges in Cameroon are departments under major universities with separate departments responsible for professional and theoretical courses related to educational sciences. These courses are grouped into one department, the Sciences of Education, for the two years (Higher Teachers’ Training) programme for students in all faculties:

Science of Education I

- EDI 411 Histories and Philosophy of Education/Sociology of Education
- EDI 412 General psychology/child and adolescent psychology

Science of Education II

- EDI 413 Psychology of learning
- EDI 414 Didactics and general pedagogy

The above grouping seems to emphasise educational psychology, considering mainly areas of learning, development and intelligence. These, as mentioned before are context-free, because they do not prepare the teachers to focus on problems in the context of a school or subject-matter.

Nevertheless, these theoretical courses are taught superficially and Ebode (cited in Tambo, 1995, p. 64) argues that most ÉNS⁵ faculties are academics with no pedagogic background related to their disciplines, because disciplines related to the professional education of teachers such as educational psychology, philosophy of education, curriculum development, school administration and others have had low prestige and are grouped under one department labelled Sciences of Education. This arrangement, Ebode claims, renders the teaching of education-related courses superficial and ineffective. Tchombe (n.d) emphasises that the essential courses for professional training are treated in a very shallow manner; out of the 32 to 36 hours a week of course offerings in all the levels of teacher education, only an average of 6 hours are devoted to education courses. As a result, students feel they are not adequately prepared for the profession. Nonetheless, there is clear recognition of the relevance of a theoretical framework for teacher training but no clear direction and guidance on how to integrate this theory in teacher education.

2.2 Implications of Didactics for Second Language Teaching

Teachers need theoretical knowledge in didactics, because, as Kansanen (1990, p. 17) has stated ‘Didactics is regarded in Finland as the professional and scientific basis for the teaching profession’. In the same spirit, Harjanne and Tella (2007) suggested that foreign language didactics could well serve as the professional scientific background for language teachers. Teachers need to maintain a balance between the didactical relation (relation between student and the content or on *studying*/ teachers’ relation to students studying) and pedagogical relation (relation between teacher and student). This is critical for, if language teachers are not conscious about the differences between these relations and if they are not aware of the focus on the core of their profession which is to influence students’ studying (Kansanen, 1999), the final outcome of second language learning and communicative ability may be affected.

As explicated by Uljens (1997), in intentional or purposive teaching, a teacher tries to support an individual’s study process, not the individuals’ learning process. This is to say that teaching indirectly affects the learning process through the stu-

⁵ École Normale Supérieure (ÉNS), Higher Teachers Training College.

dent's way of studying. Therefore, teaching is conceived cognitively by the student and may then lead to a decision by the student to consciously try to study in a certain way in order to reach some kind of competence. This claim was earlier emphasised by Kansanen (1993), who argued that it is not possible to make learning take place by means of will power or by means of a decision on the part of the student. Kansanen points out that it is only possible to steer the activities of the students with the purpose of fostering learning, or the student can wish and try to do something that he or the teacher thinks will probably lead to learning, but learning itself occurs unconsciously depending on various personal and contextual factors. Additionally, both the teacher and the student can mould the learning process; the teacher does so by teaching and the student by studying (Uljen, 1997).

I also agree with Prabhu (1990), that teaching can promote learning but we cannot expect that teaching a thing automatically leads to learning it. In the context of second language teaching, it logically follows that through teaching we cannot guarantee that students will study or learn the language but even so, teaching is and will remain the central instrument to direct the students' study processes. Yrjönsuuri (2000, cited in Harjanne & Tella 2007), points out that human beings can promote their own learning through their own activities, but they cannot exactly decide how much or how well they will learn and they will certainly not always know what they have learnt. Finally, Harjanne and Tella (2007) conclude:

Admittedly, one *can* learn a foreign language directly as a consequence of the teaching process without further study and also as a result of studying without any teaching. A foreign language can also be learnt without purposive, target-oriented teaching or studying, which often takes place in the context of different hobbies that use foreign languages. Still, as a conclusion, the didactic teaching–studying–learning process emphasises foreign language teaching and studying, as these activities can be affected and they are controllable. (Harjanne & Tella, 2007, p. 207)

From these theoretical viewpoints, it follows that studying cannot simply be replaced by learning, as they intrinsically refer to different things. In didactics, the main emphasis is on teaching (science or art) and on studying (i.e. students' or pupils' study processes, strategies and practices). Optimally, all this leads to learning (outcomes), but it is not appropriate to speak of learning when one clearly means studying. As indicated previously; neither the student nor teacher can decide when second language learning will take place nor control it, but they can influence the study process, leading eventually to learning.

Nonetheless, the teacher who points to affordances and engages her students through pedagogical scaffolding skills in the second language lesson can shape any and all of the three components of the teaching–studying–learning (TSL) process. Harjanne and Tella (2007) point out that affordances and scaffolding represent current *strong signals* in foreign/second language education, with each playing an important role in any of the three major components of the teaching–studying–learning (TSL) process. The concept of language didactics has therefore widened to

cover the whole didactic teaching–studying–learning process, which is important from the point of view of the present research.

As a key concept in the present study and especially related to the teaching process, *pedagogical scaffolding* defines the teachers' role in interaction in the TSL process. The term Scaffolding was introduced by the work of Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976), in their study of mother-child interaction in a peekaboo game. Their study documented how the mother supported the child's participation and 'scaffolded' the child's action by 'handing over' parts of the game, as the child showed signs of taking the initiative (van Lier, 2007). This illustrates that in classrooms rich with social interactions, a teacher or a more able peer can provide support or scaffolding that enables students to develop strategies or understandings that they would not have been capable of on their own (Many, Dewberry, Taylor, & Coady, 2009). However, Gibbons (2002) stresses that scaffolding is not just another word for 'help'. She emphasises that it is a special kind of help that assists students to move toward new skills, concepts or levels of understanding. She points out that scaffolding is temporary assistance by which a teacher helps students know how to do something, so that the student will be able to complete a similar task alone. This challenges teachers to maintain high expectations of all students, but to provide adequate scaffolding for tasks to be completed successfully (p. 10). Furthermore, for scaffolding to occur, teachers must first assess students' existing understanding before providing support (Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2012).

Many previous studies (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990; Many et al., 2009; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2012) describe a wide range of methods of scaffolding students, for instance, modelling, instructing, questioning, contingency management, feeding back and cognitive structuring. These studies also indicate that scaffolding can be planned before teaching through the creation of broad instructional frames and at the same time, teachers implement instructional scaffolding by being alert to teachable moments both when designing teaching and during teaching itself. Scaffolding is also considered as temporary and is withdrawn, once students are able to perform the task independently (Gibbons, 2002). Van Lier (2007) argues that in order to make sense of the concept, scaffolding must be seen as *both* a design feature *and* an interactional process. Only this way can scaffolding be a practical pedagogical tool that is supportive as well as liberating, guiding as well as autonomy-supporting. It is this definition this study adopts when describing, analysing and interpreting how teachers scaffold or support student interaction in the ESL classroom. The concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) has been extensively examined in connection with scaffolding.

For Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development is the difference between what a person can achieve when acting alone and what the same person can accomplish when acting with support from someone else and/or cultural artifacts. As for the novice/expert interaction Lantolf (2000, 2008) notes that people working jointly are able to co-construct contexts in which expertise emerges as a feature of the group. However, Lantolf points out that a broader understanding of the ZPD is needed to include more than just expert/novice. The ZPD then is more appropriately conceived as the collaborative construction of opportunities for individuals to develop their mental abilities. He adds that even in those cases in which experts

and novices do come together, as in a teaching situation, novices do not merely copy experts' capabilities; rather they transform what the experts offer them as they appropriate it (p.17). This also points to the importance of meaningful communicative interaction as emphasised throughout this study.

Another important concept—*Affordance* was coined by Gibson (1979) in his ecological theory of perception. Gibson (1979) defines an affordance as 'a reciprocal relationship between an organism and a particular feature of its environment'. In his adoption of affordance, van Lier (2004, p. 252) points out that an affordance affords further action but does not cause or trigger it, because what becomes an affordance depends on what the organism does, what it wants and what it is useful for. For example, a leaf in a forest can offer very different affordances to different organisms—crawling on the tree for a frog, cutting for an ant/ shade for spider, food for caterpillar and medicine for a shaman. The leaf remains the same but different properties are perceived and acted upon by different organisms. Similarly, the language classroom remains the same but provides opportunities for action at any one time.

In the field of language education, van Lier (2004) contends that the environment is full of language that provides opportunities for learning to the active participating learner. In his definition, an affordance is a particular property of the environment that is relevant—for good or for ill—to an active, perceiving organism in that environment. Therefore from the pedagogical perspective van Lier (2004) emphasises the need for teachers to provide a rich 'semiotic budget' to structure students' activities and participation so that access is available and engagement encouraged. This also points to another relevant aspect; affordances are linguistic as well as social (Harjanne & Tella, 2008).

As for their importance in learning, Segalowitz (2001, p. 15) argues that affordances are important because it is only by being able to perceive affordances that an organism is able to navigate its way around the environment successfully. In other words both the one who provides the affordances (teacher) and the one receiving (student) have to be active in the environment. Therefore, the current study makes use of the concept of affordances in relation to the context of this study—ESL classroom. This context obliges teachers to realise, accordingly, that different pupils perceive different affordances and act differently, despite the fact that the language classroom remains the same or even when the linguistic tasks given to pupils looks the same (van Lier, 2000; Harjanne & Tella, 2008).

What then actually happens to the teaching–studying–learning (TSL) process when affordances and pedagogical scaffolding/support are brought into the process? Figure 2 illustrates this process

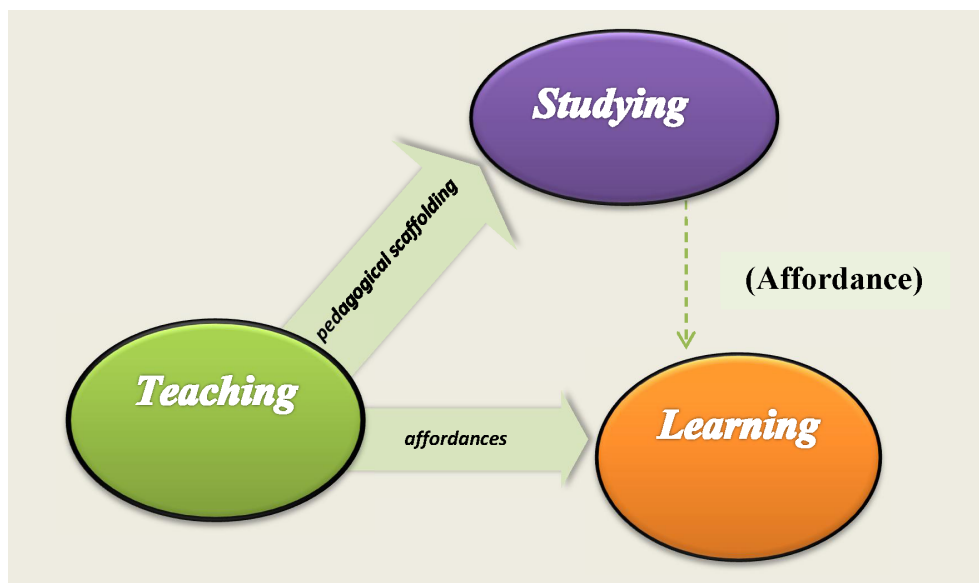


Figure 2. The intervention of affordances and pedagogical scaffolding in the second language Teaching–Studying–Learning process

Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen (2012), point out that in order for teachers to understand their ‘interventions’ scaffolding must be conceived as support that is responsive to students’ existing understanding. Harjanne and Tella (2007) argue that language educators and teachers must fully understand the potential embedded in the concept of affordance, as it is likely to have an empowering impact on various teaching, studying, and learning environments. However, both viewpoints acknowledge that scaffolding students’ study processes and directing students to the linguistic and social affordances in their environment can be viewed as a necessary condition for purposive language teaching.

Accordingly, Uljens’s (1997) reflective theory of didactics suggests that teaching theory should recognise more problems than just one linked to learning in order to be valid in the pedagogical reality of the school system. He also notes that learning theory is too narrow an approach to describe and understand the didactic teaching process. Didactics should be more interested in how the teachers get the student to study how to learn than on how learning takes place in a chemical or neurological process. According to Harjanne and Tella (2007), the most crucial areas of language didactic research become foreign/second language teaching and foreign/second language studying. From this perspective, all three components of the teaching–studying–learning process are equally important: teaching a foreign/second language; studying it, and, finally, learning it. In sum, it makes more sense to contend that the central task of teaching is to enable students perform the task of studying and learning (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004).

2.3 Second Language Teaching as Didactic Action

Implementing didactics leads to didactic actions. This is why second language teaching, too, can be seen as a didactic action. Didactic actions, (classroom practice/methods, curriculum, content,) and didactics in general, are connected to some context in society, to some institution and its curriculum.

The curriculum defines the degree of freedom to act in this context and as mentioned earlier, it is pedagogy in its totality that guides the instructional process according to the aims and goals stated in the curriculum. In this case it will be more appropriate to talk of subject didactics, since it usually refers to some specific school subject—English Language. Therefore, when we speak of subject didactics we are already tightly on the action level doing very concrete things inside the curriculum. The curriculum details the content to be considered in the didactic TSL process Kansanen (2002).

Uljen (1997) maintains that if a teacher helps the student to reach some kind of competence, there is always this “something” present in the situation. He contends that it is very difficult to imagine a pedagogical situation that would not contain any kind of content. Teaching always pays attention to content, and in the *Didaktik* tradition, content has always played an important role (Kansanen, 2009). The issue of content as such is a fundamental feature of a pedagogical situation and the subject of debates. To avoid a detailed discussion on the vexing question of what constitutes such content in an educational institution—a topic for another research the importance of such content is examined in the teaching–studying–learning process.

In the process of teaching, teachers draw upon general pedagogical knowledge and knowledge that is specific to teaching particular subject matter (Shulman, 1987; Grossman, 1990; Kansanen, 2009). Consideration of such content in subject didactics constitutes the starting point for all teaching.

Additionally, a teacher’s conception or pedagogical thinking of teaching a particular subject can influence her selection and organisation of the content for teaching. Other essential aspects presented in the didactic model in Uljen’s (1997) theory of school didactics include—(a) Intentionality, (b) student-teacher interaction, (c) cultural context, (d) content, (e) methods.

In a teaching situation, pedagogical intentions are always oriented towards something considered meaningful (e.g., the student, context, content, resources, and curriculum). However, this teaching reality may suffer from conflict of intentions because the teacher and students enter the teaching–studying–learning context with different aims and goals. Teachers’ intentionality or pedagogical purposiveness is guided by their personal view of education and knowledge, rights and obligations of individual and collective, i.e., ethical reasoning and axiological world views (Uljen, 1997). Harjanne and Tella (2007) point out that the student’s and teacher’s purposiveness in a teaching context are directed by their personality factors, the conceptions of the second language and the second language teaching–studying–learning process based on prior knowledge and prior experiences as well as their pre-understanding rooted in their life histories.

Pedagogical process is always tied to a place. The students as subjects of the context represent part of the local community surrounding the school and consequently this is an additional way the local context gets acknowledged because the students bring these contexts with them into the classroom Uljens (1997). In this relation, the classroom culture represented by the second language teacher can seem strange to the students thus affecting them negatively, bringing about defiance, repression and withdrawal (Harjanne & Tella, 2007). Other contexts include the society, school and the curriculum. The curriculum represents the starting point where content matter is selected and the teaching method consists of actions needed to support an individual's study processes. Important to note here is that the pedagogical interaction between student and teacher is always asymmetrical owing to the different roles for the teacher and students.

As regard the teaching method, teachers must decide their teaching methods and approach in the pedagogic process of ESL teaching. A method can be described in three different levels—*approach*, *design* and *procedure* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

An *approach* refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serves as the source of practices and principles in language teaching. Theories also inform this level: for instance a structural view — the view that language is a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning; the functional view — language as a function of meaning in communication and the view that language is for interaction (interactionist). These provide a particular framework that may motivate a particular teaching method. *The design* is the level of method analysis which considers a) what the objectives of the method are; b) how language content is selected and organised within the method, that is, the syllabus model the method incorporates; c) the types of learning tasks and teaching activities the method advocates; d) the roles of the learners; e) the roles of teachers and f) the role of instructional materials. Finally, *the procedure* describes the activities of the teachers and students in the classroom when the method is observed. Table 2 represents the components of methods discussed.

Table 2. Summary of elements and sub elements that constitute a method (Richards & Rodgers, 2001. p. 33)

Approach	Method Design	Proedure
a. A theory of native language -an account of the nature of language proficiency -an account of the basic units of language structure b. A theory of nature of language learning -an account of the psycholinguistic and	a. The general and specific objectives of the method b. A syllabus model - Criteria for the selection and organisation of linguistic and/or subject-matter content c. Types of learning and teaching activities - Kinds of tasks and practice activities to be employed in the classroom and in materials d. learner roles - Types of learning tasks set for learners -degree of control learners have over the content of learning	a. classroom techniques, practices, and behaviours observed when the methods is used -resources in terms of time, space, and equipment used by the teacher -interactional pattern observed in lessons -tactics and strategies

cognitive processes involved in language learning -an account of the conditions that allow for successful use of these processes	-patterns of learner groupings that are recommended or implied -degree to which learners influence the learning of others -the view of learner as processor, performer, initiator, problem solver etc. e. Teacher roles -types of functions teachers fulfil -degree of teacher influence over learning -degree to which teacher determines the content of learning -types of interaction between teachers and learners f. The role of instructional materials -primary function of materials -the forms materials take (e.g., textbook, audio-visual) -relation of materials to other input -assumptions made about teachers and other learners	used by teachers and learners when the method is being used
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Therefore, in the pedagogic process of ESL teaching, teachers need to decide the content as guided by the aims and goals of the curriculum, while their classroom practices and methods consist of actions needed to support students' study processes and learning. All sub elements of a method differ, depending on the particular approach in question as discussed in section 4.2.

2.4 Teachers' Personal Didactics

This study aims at looking into how ESL teachers get students to study how to learn rather than how learning takes place inside students' brains, in other words the teachers' relation to students' studying, (didactic relation). When doing this, I agree with Kansanen (2002) when he notes the difficulty in organising this didactic relation universally or following some technical rules. He emphasises that every teacher is supposed to think and decide herself how to cope with it, and this means that every teacher has a didactics of her own. Furthermore, didactic models or textbooks may be of help but they do not remove the teacher's personal responsibility in making educational decisions.

In the context of language teaching, studies have mostly emphasised teachers' practical/personal knowledge (Elbaz, 1983) in the process of teaching (Meijer, 2001; Richards, 1996). Richards's (1996) study of the nature and roles of teaching principles revealed that teachers develop personal principles when they teach and they also attempt to implement a personal philosophy of teaching which reflects their understanding and beliefs about what good teaching is and how it is achieved. Such personal principles are expressed in *maxims*—a rule for good or sensible behaviour, especially one which is in the form of a short saying or proverb. For example the maxim of Involvement: follow the learners' interests to maintain student involvement etc. Maxims reflect individual philosophies of teaching, personal beliefs and value systems, developed from experience of teaching—studying—learning, and teacher education experiences.

Meijer et al. (2001) conducted a study of language teachers' practical knowledge with respect to teaching reading comprehension. They found a wide diversity in teachers' practical knowledge. Also identified were three typologies of teachers' practical knowledge—*a*) subject matter knowledge, *b*) student knowledge and *c*) knowledge of student learning and understanding. Their study also highlights the difficulties involved in defining the shared content of such knowledge due to its personal nature.

No doubt this individual approach to didactics continues the public debate over what should stand as the core of second language teacher education. However, Johnson (2006) argues that:

Teachers' ways of knowing that leads to praxis can enrich L2 teacher education precisely because they are generated in and emerge out of teachers' lived experiences, they highlight the interconnectedness of how teachers think about their work, they are deeply connected to the problems of practice, and they are situated in contexts in which such problems are constructed. They reflect both the processes of teacher learning and the impact of that learning on teachers' classroom practices and students' opportunities for learning. (p. 243)

Richards (1996) also reminds teacher educators of the importance of teachers' subjective accounts of principles underlying their teaching as it offers an important perspective on what teaching is and how teachers acquire the capacity to teach. Such knowledge of course should not go unchallenged as Johnson (2006) emphasises that attention be focused on creating opportunities for L2 teachers to make sense of those theories in their professional lives and settings where they work.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a discussion of the theoretical framework and definition of didactics, discussed its relationship to pedagogy, and also outlined a comprehensive overview of its implications for teaching ESL. I discussed second language teaching as didactic action stressing the pedagogical processes essential to didactics—intentionality, cultural context, student-teacher interaction, content and methods. Finally, I addressed the subjective nature of teachers' didactics and noted the importance to position such ways of knowing in a way that lead to making practice legitimate and visible to others.

In the following chapter, I will present a literature review related to teachers' pedagogical thinking and its relation to justifications of their practical knowledge.

3 Teachers' Pedagogical Thinking

A considerable body of literature has emerged about teachers' thinking in the Teaching–Studying–Learning process. This is important not only in educational reform and professional development, but in ensuring quality teaching–study–learning and improved educational outcomes. As a result, the issue of the epistemic merit of teachers' justification of their knowing in educational contexts is gaining increasing attention. This current chapter will address the issue of teachers' pedagogical thinking by reviewing research addressing particularly the notion of pedagogical thinking and justifications.

3.1 Definition of Teacher Pedagogical Thinking and How It Develops

Teacher thinking in the teaching–studying–learning process is referred to in various ways. For example over the last two decades, the terminology for teacher thinking has varied from teachers' 'thought processes' (Clark & Peterson, 1986) 'cognition' (Elbaz, 1983), 'practical theories' (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Richards, 1996; Meijer, 2001) 'beliefs' (Calderhead, 1988; Pajares, 1992; Kalaja & Barcelds, 2003), 'images', 'conceptions' and 'narratives' (Kalaja, Menezes & Barcelds, 2008) to name but a few. To a great extent, many of these new terms appear to be interchangeable, depending on the particular aspect of teachers' mental work lives considered.

Brousseau et al. (1988) defined teachers' thinking as orientations, beliefs and opinions about teaching. This definition is at best a basic view of what teachers think, but has not come to define pedagogical thinking as we view it today.

After studying various aspects of teacher pedagogical thinking, Kansanen et al. (2000, p. 3), noted the essential components of teacher pedagogical thinking. These are decision-making, context, and curriculum. Their study illustrates that teachers make educational decisions all the time and according to this idea, the skill of making rational decisions is the most important amongst many that teachers need in their job. In order to make rational decisions a teacher also needs to take a pedagogical stand while she acts in the classroom, hence choosing between alternatives in order to arrive at a certain result. Consequently this kind of thinking is also normative. Such thinking is not just every day or common sense thinking for instance, teachers' economic thinking, but teachers' thinking in the instructional teaching–studying–learning process. This viewpoint is further clarified by Van Manen who explains that:

By virtue of their daily task, teachers are less attentive to the general than to the unique. The teacher's ongoing concerns are less with institutional problems than with personal problems, less with school productivity than with success of their own students, less with system infra-structure than with personal relational concerns, less with political educational issues than with emotional and moral issues, less with the corporate efficacies of their practices than with the interpersonal dimensions of their actions. In this sense the focus of teach-

ers tends to be on what we here call the ‘pedagogical’—the complexity of relational, personal, moral, emotional, aspects of teachers’ everyday acting with children or young people they teach. (Van Manen, 2002, p. 135)

In other words, pedagogical thinking is carried out in contexts where the duties and responsibilities of education need to be taken into consideration (Kansanen, 1995; Kansanen et al., 2000). For teachers to deal effectively with this pedagogical relation (relation between teacher and student) educational decisions require criteria which teachers can find in the curriculum, but as not all these criteria are stated explicitly; consequently, the teacher must deduce, reflect and elaborate when coming to a decision. What happens in the process or how these decisions are made and justified is of paramount importance in pedagogical thinking research (Kansanen, 1995; Tirri, Husu, & Kansanen, 1999; Kansanen et al., 2000), I agree with Kansanen et al. that to get to know such thinking is to ask the teacher what kinds of arguments and justifications lie behind her decisions.

Additionally, the curriculum defines the context of this interaction. It is therefore logical to differentiate between activities and principles in school and elsewhere—thus the necessity of the term ‘pedagogical’. As explicated before, pedagogical takes its meaning from the curriculum, from the aims and goals stated there. Being pedagogical, therefore, is thinking according to the aims and goals stated in the curriculum (Van Manen, 1991; Tirri et al., 1999).

What is important about Kansanen et al. (2000) is the implication that teachers’ pedagogical thinking is purposive, involving both curriculum and the context, including educational authorities. The ideal professional teacher’s thinking should be qualified as purposive, indicating how deeply the teacher has become acquainted with the purposes, aims and goals given in the curriculum. This means in Kansanen’s view that internalizing the value aspects of the curriculum should form the background for teachers’ thinking thus emphasizing loyalty and commitment to the curriculum. Furthermore, they note that critical thinking should be an overarching theme of teacher pedagogical thinking, so that teachers should not lose their individuality and personal approach in the teaching–studying–learning process (Kansanen, 2001).

Teachers’ pedagogical thinking develops through experience

As pointed out, teachers have the task to think and act according to the aims and goals stated in the curriculum. In turn, it is expected that after a long period of familiarization with the aims and goals the teacher gradually internalizes and incorporates them into his/her own thinking. Nonetheless, thinking and acting according to the purposes in the curriculum is characterized by purposiveness which develops gradually during professional experience (Kansanen, 1995; Kansanen, 2001). This suggests that with experience, teachers can learn to automatize the routines associated with the curriculum and can thus focus more on arguments and justifications in the values in and behind the curriculum. Such personal knowledge is acquired from experience (Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001). However, Kansanen (1995) argues that teacher education provides a solid foundation for pedagogical thinking depending on the role we want teachers to adopt as he notes:

...in teacher education, we try to educate the student teachers to decide on the basis of educational aims and goals. That is to say there is purpose behind the practice and the action can be said to be purposive. We believe, or at least we hope, that this purpose and the criteria behind the decision process are pedagogical by nature....I think that it is practical to say that we have here a dimension from dependent to independent thinking, and the first problem is how far a teacher can develop along this dimension; secondly, is it generally possible to teach and learn to be independent; and finally, do we act wisely if we try to help teachers to act independently, neutrally and scientifically in their work? (pp. 251–252)

By way of explanation, it is possible for teacher education to guide prospective teachers' thinking so that they can grow and build a personal pedagogical ideology and thus they come to understand the kinds of premises which inform their thinking concerning how they can make decisions consciously and deliberately. How to guide prospective teachers' pedagogical ideologies is the basic problem in teacher education. At its simplest, therefore, the quality of pedagogical thinking is determined by teachers' pedagogical expertise.

Teachers' pedagogical thinking develops through reflection

Regarding the value of such pedagogical expertise, Dewey (1910, 1933) argued that teachers need to develop particular skills, such as observation and reasoning, in order to reflect effectively, and should have qualities such as open-mindedness, wholeheartedness and responsibility. Additionally, Dewey (1933) considered reflective action based on 'the active persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it' (p. 9), and motivated by the need to solve a particular problem. (Schön, 1987; Kansanen, 1995; Griffiths, 2000; Van Manen, 2002). Dewey's sense of the term 'reflection' involved a chain of thoughts or sequence of ideas, leading to a consequence or future course of action. This view suggests reflection as a means to get information on one's own work. Kansanen et al. (2000) point out that reflection is not only lonely work, but interaction with the literature in one's field of study; exchanging experiences with colleagues in order to widen one's perspective and get new viewpoints to one's thinking. Additionally, contemplation and discussion is not enough for reflection pre-supposes distance and this distance we get through real research work.

However, only a few teachers are teacher-researchers but they need to know how to use research knowledge in their work. Hence a reflective teacher is one who uses the principles of research in her thinking in making decisions but is not a professional researcher (Kansanen et al., 2000). Maclellan (2008) states that to be pedagogically literate teachers must be able to access and use the specialised written documents of pedagogic knowledge. According to Maclellan, the process of learning to teach is a process of changing one's representations, and failure to access the literature on the practice and theory of education, and of integrating such literature into extant frames of reference will leave the teacher pedagogically vulnerable on the occasions when tried and tested practices fail 'to work' (p.1988).

Shulman (1987) offers a useful clarification of pedagogical reflection as what a teacher does when he or she looks back at the teaching and learning that has occurred, and reconstructs, re-enacts, and/or recaptures the events, the emotions and the accomplishments. He also points out that reflection is not merely a disposition but also the use of particular kinds of analytic knowledge brought to bear on one's work (p. 19).

To explain how teachers actually develop reflection, Schön (1983, 1987) introduced a radically different notion of 'reflection-in-action' to describe a professional's thinking during action. Schön explains that in reflection-in-action, practitioners are confronted with challenging situations, for which they develop a new way to manage a problem by reflecting on the contextual factors that others as well as they themselves have brought into the situation (1983, p. 63). Consequently, practitioners try to find a solution to the unique problematic situation; they see it as new and unfamiliar, as well as familiar to their previous experiences already in their repertoire (Schön 1983, p.138).

Though Schön's concept 'reflection-in-action' and ideas about professional development have been influential in teacher education, it has also resulted in a healthy debate over reflection in the teaching–studying–learning process as the term is used rather loosely. Disagreement has arisen over the confusing interpretation of the term 'reflection'. For Bengtsson (1995), 'to react on or interact with a situation is not the same as to reflect upon it' (p. 29) and he adds that teachers' everyday practice with students is complicated and it is not possible to reflect in it, neither is it also possible to distance oneself for reflection, nor possible to stop all action during interactive teaching. Eraut (1995) points out that Schön's evidence is based on incidents where teachers had to involve in problem-solving rather than an analysis of everyday practice. Eraut also argues that Schön fails to take sufficient account of the time frame involved, and that the processes he identifies cannot easily take place at the same time. This seems to be the case in the complex, fast moving and continually changing context of the TSL process, where it is difficult for the teachers' action in this process to be referred to as reflection. Eraut therefore distinguishes between on-the-spot more intuitive aspects (immediate) where decisions have to be rapid, and the more deliberative aspects of the process which might take place while the students are working quietly and the teacher decides how to intervene. Therefore Eraut (1995) notes that 'the more reflection assumes a critical function, the less appropriate it becomes to describe it as being in the action' (p.14).

Van Manen (1995) describes this rapid decision making process as the 'immediate reflective awareness that characterizes the active and dynamic process of a routine lesson' (p.34). This kind of instant response he referred to as 'tactful action', and argues that it involves perceptiveness, and is 'governed by insight while relying on feeling' (p.44). From this perspective, fast moving responses are also needed in a classroom situation. Taken together, reflection before, during and after the interactive phases of teaching becomes a bridge to practice by establishing warrants to practical knowledge and pedagogical thinking and a means to add to teachers' professional knowledge that can be drawn on later. Eraut (1999) reminds us by drawing a medical analogy that just as diagnosis does not automatically lead to

treatment, so reflection does not necessarily lead directly to changes in practice. However, Eraut stressed the need for teachers to keep their practice under 'critical control' as part of their wider responsibilities because maintaining a critical review of one's practice is an important part of professional accountability and quality control.

However, there is much merit in believing that pedagogical thinking after the interactive phase of the teaching–studying–learning process focuses teachers' attention on the meanings and significance of their professional actions and experiences. When teachers reflect on their pedagogical actions, it enriches their practical knowledge base, helps teachers to make sense of past experiences and thus gain new or deeper insights into the meaning of experiences they have with children, and enables them to become more experienced practitioners as teachers (Van Manen, 1991a, pp. 512–513). However, this merit is corrupted and demeaned when this knowledge is not subject to justification or cannot or should not be justified (Fenstermacher, 1994).

3.2 Teachers' Pedagogical Justifications in the Teaching–Studying–Learning Process

Discussions on personal knowledge acquired through experience demonstrate that teachers learn a great deal on the job simply by doing. It is this store of knowledge gained from personal experiences that teachers use to justify their decisions/actions in the T–S–L process. Fenstermacher (1994) maintains that any justification of knowledge must have epistemic import, 'To the extent a conception of knowledge does have epistemic merit, it will provide a basis for determining the strength, confidence or trustworthiness of a claim to know something, whether that knowledge is propositional or performative, formal or practical' (p. 35). From this perspective, what a teacher knows and how this knowing is justified, raises epistemological issues related to individual teachers (Tirri et al., 1999). Additionally, teaching is usually associated with epistemological issues (knowledge which is the property of the individual minds) since teachers view their job at least in part, as having to do with transmission of knowledge (Kansanen et al., 2000).

Fenstermacher (1994) advances thinking about teachers' justification of their practical knowledge, by taking into consideration multiple dimensions. One way teachers justify their practical knowledge is to offer 'good reasons' for doing something or believing something. In turn, this reasoning shows that an action is 'the reasonable thing to do, obvious thing to do, or the only thing to do under the circumstances' (p.45). From a phronesis or practical reasoning perspective, providing reasons for actions, makes action sensible to the actor and the observer. What is significant about Fenstermacher (1994) is the implication that teacher knowledge research should show not 'that teachers think, believe or have opinions but that they know, and even more important, they know what they know' (p. 51). Kansanen et al. (2000) also clarify that when teacher knowledge is viewed from the phronesis perspective, teachers' thinking should be defined in terms of their personal experiences and their reported deeds and results.

According to Toulmin (1958), another way of justifying practical knowledge is thinking in terms of arguments. The use of argument analysis clarifies how teachers justify their educational decisions. Fenstermacher and Richardson (1993) found that a practical argument has a specific structure that includes four types of premises:

- I The *value premise*—a statement of the human benefit or good to be derived.
- II The *stipulative premise*—a statement that defines, interprets or establishes meaning
- III The *empirical premise*—a statement subject to empirical scrutiny
- IV The *situational premise*—a statement that describes the context in which the action takes places (pp 106–107).

Other studies (Morine-Dersheimer, 1987; Tirri, Husu, & Kansanen, 1999; Gholami, 2009) increase understanding of the actions teachers take in their everyday practice of teaching. Gholami (2009), in an illuminative empirical study, found that teachers used practical arguments to support their actions; the main function of the practical argument for the teachers was the fact that they had to ‘do’ something based on a ‘practical judgement’ in order to cope with the unpredictable demands in the teaching context. The findings also indicated that practical arguments including different premises (i.e., value, stipulative, empirical and situational) were found in a large portion of the teachers’ justification of their actions. Additionally, teachers justified their principles of practice by referring to their personal pedagogical belief systems (Tirri et al., 1999).

Along with practical arguments and reasoning, Tirri et al. (1999) found that the nature of teachers’ justifications of their practical knowledge is both moral and professional. In the moral dimension, teachers argued that they took certain courses of action because it was in the best interest of the child. The professional stance was based on rules of practice and principles of practice. Additionally, teachers also combined intuitive reasoning with more rational justifications in their teaching practice (Elbaz, 1983). The rules of practice and principles of practice were considered to be bases for teachers’ pedagogical decisions because of the connection between the rules of practice and their supposed or intended outcomes (p. 918). Within the context of language teaching, the study by Richards (1996) was also concerned with the rules and principles teachers employed in their lessons and with how they explain the basis for their decisions and actions during language teaching. He proposes that ‘personal working principles reflect teachers’ individual philosophies of teaching, developed from their experience of teaching and learning, their teacher education experiences, and from their own personal beliefs and value systems’ (p.293).

Through data analysis from a corpus of teacher narratives about language teaching, the language teachers in Richards’ study justified their teaching decisions and actions with reference to *maxim*—personal working principles. For example, *the maxim of involvement* means following the learners’ interests to maintain student involvement; the *maxim of planning* refers to planning one’s teaching and

trying to follow your plan; *the maxim of order*: maintain order and discipline throughout the lesson; *the maxim of encouragement*: seek ways to encourage student learning; *the maxim of accuracy*: work for accurate student output, etc. For these teachers, such personal principles inform their approach to teaching; they function like rules for best behaviour and guide/justify many of the teachers' instructional decisions. Breen et al. (2001) conducted a study of teachers' descriptions of and justifications for classroom action involving 18 experienced teachers of ESL to adults and children in Australia. This work provides detailed insight into teachers' descriptions and interpretations of their own actions. Through observation and elicitation procedures, five researchers examined the relationship, at both an individual and group level between the practices and principles of these teachers working in the same context.

An analysis of the profiles generated by the Breen et al. study, shows that individual teachers realised specific pedagogic principles through a set of favoured practices. At the group level, language teachers of similar experience working with ESL students in a similar situation are likely to implement a shared principle through a diverse range of different practices. However, an analysis of the practices which were justified by the teachers with reference to these shared principles showed that any one principle was realised through several distinct practices, for example, the use of pair or group work, explicit modelling or explanation of aspects of language. The 18 teachers justified the use of pair or group work in the class with reference to 23 mostly different principles—many of the teachers of children appeared to place a high value on what they regarded as supportive group dynamics in the classroom whilst teachers of adults tended to attribute pair or group work with the opportunity for student consolidation of more formal aspects of language, while explicit teacher modelling and explanation was justified across the 18 teachers on the basis of 29 principles.

The study showed that behind the apparent diversity of practices there is a 'collective pedagogy wherein a widely adopted classroom practice is...an expression of a specific and largely distinctive set of principles, furthermore, a practice commonly adopted by a group of teachers appeared to express, for them, a set of principles which were mostly different from another set of principles justifying a different practice' (p. 496).

In summary, the findings reported above illustrate that there are several different grounds on which teachers rely on for justifying their educational decisions.

3.3 Teachers' Pedagogical Justifications as Professional Development: Praxis for Professionals

Borg (2006) argues that beliefs, principles and conceptions about teaching and learning exert an influence on teachers throughout their career; therefore, language teachers need to be cognizant of their own beliefs (pp.283–284). This is important according to Borg because ignoring these beliefs may limit the influence of practical and theoretical knowledge on cognition and on language teaching. Teachers also need to reflect on their beliefs and language teaching experiences in order to develop professionally (Richards, 1996; Kansanen et al., 2000). As noted earlier,

teachers' rely on moral dimension for justifying their practices. Thus Gholami (2011) writes that teachers as practitioners must be careful and competent when they want to make practical decisions in their professional relationships with pupils. It is also dependent upon the right acting that teachers can bring about the right results in pupils. Consequently, careful pedagogical decisions which are based on well-designed teaching and studying practices and on pedagogically-solid decisions by the teacher can be regarded as an important aspect of internal goods of teaching (p. 134). In relation to justification of a language teaching method, a teacher can rely on several aspects of the method, approach, design and procedure (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) to justify her actions in a lesson.

In other words understanding teaching as a moral craft puts teachers in a professional position to see teaching as not merely 'managing and implementing curricular programs but as transformative intellectuals who combine scholarly reflection and practice' in the service of educating students to be thoughtful (Giroux, 1988).

Such pedagogically sound justifications must embrace the advantage alluded to by Fenstermacher (1994), that is, from a practical reasoning perspective, the tacit quality of teachers' knowing opens the possibility for reflective consideration 'once aware of it, the teacher can deliberate or reflect upon it, and if it is found meritorious in that teacher's conception of his work, advance it as a reason to justify acting as he did' (p. 48). This means that theory and practice have to be brought together to achieve praxis.

Finally, the professional development of teachers is a systematic process and embedded in the *phronesis-praxis* perspective as teachers' practical and pedagogical activities are considered to have internal 'good' and stand in a constitutive relationship with 'ends'. Therefore, a teacher can guide their pedagogical activities with *phronesis* which is not based on general and universal theories that she can apply in different situations, but rather a cognitively practical competence that guides actions based on sound judgments in order to read the particularity of situations in the absence of general guidelines and standards (Gholami, 2010, p. 137).

Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the literature on teachers' pedagogical thinking. After presenting a definition of teachers' pedagogical thinking and how it develops, I reviewed the grounds for teachers' justifications of their practical knowledge. Drawing on the literature, I examined perspectives on language teachers' justifications of their actions in teaching. Teachers justify their educational decisions in varying ways; however in order to develop professionally, teachers need to demonstrate through practical arguments and reasoning that their judgments are sound and their actions are reasonably good.

The next chapter examines Communicative Language Teaching as the methodology in which teachers' teaching methods and their justifications are analysed.

4 Second Language Teaching

Second language teaching is at the heart of this study. In the history of language teaching there have been several pendulum swings in the approaches to teaching (Kelly, 1969). Through the past century or so of language teaching, there have also been varied interpretations of the best way to teach a foreign/second language. Teaching methods, as 'approaches in action', are the practical application of theoretical findings and positions on how people/students learn languages inside and outside the classroom (Brown, 2007, pp. 17–25). Moreover, with the proliferation of new approaches and methods in the twentieth century, teachers need to make enlightened choices of teaching practices solidly grounded in the best way of what we know about second language teaching–studying–learning. This chapter discusses second language teaching from the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach as the theoretical background and the officially dominant approach for the last 40 years till present.

4.1 Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is “a generalized ‘*umbrella*’ term to describe learning sequences which aim to improve the students’ ability to communicate, in contrast to teaching which is aimed more at learning bits of language just because they exist — without focusing on their use in communication” Harmer (2007, p.70, cited in Littlewood, 2011, p. 542). This means that CLT involves expressing meaning through the use of a second or foreign language for and in communication in social interaction. Here, second language typically means academic subject matter such as English Language, Swedish or Spanish. In CLT, social interaction is seen as a means and goal of learning a language. To focus on communication aspects, foreign/ second language teaching follows principles central to most CLT interpretations.

According to Brown (2007, pp. 45–50), foreign/second language teaching currently focuses on real-world contexts and the objective of this principle is to develop students’ ability to express meanings and use a foreign/second language in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. CLT is also student-centred teaching which requires students to take an active part in their own study processes, but not at the expense of appropriate teacher-centred activity. Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writing (p.49). A communicative task becomes the core unit of designing and implementing teaching and its focus is on successful communication and thus on meaning (CEFR, 2001, p.158).

Communicative Language Teaching also advocates that curricula should be organised by teaching of the functional aspects as well as structural and semantic aspects of the language. However, the focus of CLT has been the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through students’ participation in communicative events (Savignon, n.d; Savignon, 2005).

This is in response to traditional approaches to language teaching, which may rely on de-contextualised drill exercises to teach language. Therefore, CLT proposes that language should not be taught in a manner that is isolated from meaning and communication, instead it should be taught within content-rich, authentic contexts. Still, many advocates and teachers of the CLT approach acknowledge that two versions (weak, strong) of CLT are in practice in most classrooms today. Thus, for instance, Howatt (1984) distinguishes between the ‘weak’ version of CLT which ‘stresses the importance of providing students with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching’. The ‘strong’ version of CLT, on the other hand, ‘advances the claim that language is acquired through communication and in the context of learning English’. At its simplest, the weak version of CLT can be described as ‘learning to use’ English and the strong version ‘using English to learn it’ Howatt (1984, p. 279).

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001) describes in a comprehensive way what language users/students have to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The CEFR remains the most influential document with its action-based theoretical approach that has influenced language policies in many countries over the past 13 years or so.

It views users and learners of a language primarily as ‘social agents’, i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning... the action based approach therefore also takes into account the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources and full range of abilities specific to and applied by the individual as social agent (CEFR, 2001, p. 9).

The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. Moreover, the framework defines levels of proficiency which allows progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis (CEFR, 2001, p.1).

According to Littlewood (2011), CLT has emerged as a major force in English as a second language pedagogy, with a rationale founded on the notion that integrating the functional-communicative dimension in language teaching has pedagogic value, as the use of meaningful language will motivate students ‘so that students are more aware of the functional and social aspects of the language they are practising. For example, they may carry out a controlled pair-work activity in which they ‘make suggestions’ in various situations and later engage in a less controlled role-play based on a similar situation’ (p. 547).

Littlewood (2011) also argues that CLT requires better qualified language teachers, and teachers who are not only well qualified academically but more widely in terms of their capacities as teacher-professionals. Language teachers must, therefore, be knowledgeable in content areas and be able to scaffold students. Furthermore, language teachers have a responsibility to keep context and comprehensibility foremost, to select and adapt authentic materials for use in the ESL

classroom, to provide scaffolding for students' linguistic content learning, and to create learner-centred classrooms. Interestingly, the CEFR notes that

As a social agent, each individual forms relationships with a widening cluster of overlapping social groups, which together define identity. In an intercultural approach, it is central objective of language education to promote favourable development of the learner's whole personality and sense of identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture. It must be left to teachers and the learners themselves to reintegrate the many parts into a healthily developing whole (p.103)

If we are to support teachers to critically observe their teaching methods and implement successful pedagogical practices for English as second language, then it seems logical that we should understand the role of the teacher-professional within the subject domain.

According to Breidbach (2011, p. 106), 'the pedagogic aim in language teaching therefore is for learners to learn a language in order to actually use it in social interaction for specific aims'. The inherent challenge presented by CLT is explicitly stated by Spada (2007). According to her, a balance needs to be struck between language-focused and meaning-focused L2 teaching regardless of what cover term may be attached to a set of pedagogical procedures intended to accomplish CLT (Spada, 2007).

4.1.1 Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

A considerable body of literature has emerged about core principles that characterise CLT. CLT is best considered an approach and not a method thus leaving its doors open for a great variety of methods and techniques (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Littlewood, 2011; Freeman & Anderson, 2011). There is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative. By and large it refers to a diverse set of principles that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures. These principles include:

- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error
- Students are co-operative participators in communication
- Teacher's role—mentor, instructor, needs analysis, task organizer, researcher and learner
- Role of materials—task-based, authentic, supporting communicative languages use
- Objectives of language learning are functional and linguistic; the starting point; the students' needs, experiences and contents meaningful authentic

communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Brown, 2007; Harjanne & Tella, 2009; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Despite the lack of universally accepted models, there has been some degree of consensus required to justify the label 'CLT' or to describe what Littlewood (2011) calls 'communicative classrooms' Wesche and Skehan (2002, cited in Littlewood 2011):

- Activities that require frequent interaction among learners or with other interlocutors to exchange information and solve problems
- Use of authentic (non-pedagogic) texts and communication activities linked to the 'real world' contexts, often emphasizing links across written and spoken modes and channels
- Approaches that are learner centred in that they take into account learners' backgrounds, language needs and goals, and generally allow learners some creativity role in instructional decisions. (Littlewood 2011, p. 208)

Thus these features clearly focus on communication and student-centeredness. However, Littlewood (2011) argues for a more inclusive account of CLT as essential for representing more adequately its claims and purposes and for facilitating its acceptance at the practical level. According to Littlewood (2011), this is possible within a framework of CLT methodology which seeks to accommodate both the experiential and analytical aspects of teaching and learning along a continuum from non-communicative activities to authentic communication (table 3).

Table 3. The communicative continuum as a basis for Communicative Language Teaching based on Littlewood (2011)

Analytic Strategies	←	→	Experiential Strategies	
Non-communicative learning	Pre-communi- cative language practice	Communicative language prac- tice	Structured communication	Authentic communi- cation
Focusing on the structures of lan- guage, how they are formed and what they mean, e.g. substitu- tion exercises, induc- tive ‘discovery’ and awareness-raising activities	Practising lan- guage with some- one attention to meaning but not communicating new messages to others, e.g. de- scribing visuals or situational lan- guage practice (‘questions and answers’)	Practising pre- taught language but in a context where it com- municates new information, e.g. information gap activities or ‘personalised’ questions	Using language to communicate in situations which elicit pre- learnt language but with some unpredictability, e.g. structured role-play and simple problem solving	Using language to communi- cate in situations where the meanings are unpre- dictable, e.g. creative role-play, more com- plex prob- lem-solving and discus- sion
Focus on forms and meanings		←	→	Focus on mean- ings and mes- sages

These strategies, he argues, can provide links between familiar activities and new ones that serve context-specific needs, and serve a framework to inspire teachers to explore their current practice and generate further possibilities. However, Spada (2007) reminds us that misconceptions abound in the ways in which teachers have chosen to implement CLT often for practical reasons which supports the general finding that CLT is interpreted differently by teachers in different contexts. This is also supported by other studies (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999) who found that most L2 teachers claim to be using CLT whereas communicative L2 classrooms still seem to be in the minority.

This raises major challenges for teachers who find it impossible to meet the demands of examinations, students’ avoidance of English, and conflict with current practices, values and beliefs about student and teacher roles. The result may be teachers’ rejection of official CLT policies and principles and the continued practice of fragmented/ examination-oriented classroom teaching or the chalk-and-talk drill method. Teachers’ beliefs, their image of self, their students and pedagogical preferences (Borg, 2006) are reasons why language teachers prefer more teacher-centred to language teaching to CLT. However, Brown (2007) reminds us that teachers’ approach to language pedagogy is not just a set of static principles set in stone, but as both an enlightened and eclectic teacher, ‘you think in terms of the number of possible methodological options at your disposal for tailoring classes to particular contexts’ (p. 43). This becomes even more critical when we approach the

subject commencing with the goal of teaching a L2 from Communicative Competence to Intercultural Communicative Competence.

4.1.2 Significance of Communicative Competence for Communicative Language Teaching

Earlier developments proposed that the goal in CLT is to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as ‘communicative competence’. Hymes’s theory of communicative competence was a definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community (cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 159). This perspective offers a much more comprehensive view than Chomsky’s view of competence which deals primarily with abstract grammatical knowledge. Therefore, learning a second language for proponents of CLT is acquiring the linguistic means to perform different kinds of functions (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). An early influential analysis of communicative competence in a second language is that of Canale and Swain’s (1980) model of communicative competence, which introduced three dimensions of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence.

- *Grammatical competence* includes knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, semantics and phonology that have been the traditional focus of second language learning.
- *Sociolinguistic competence* consists primarily of knowledge of how to use language appropriately in social situations, e.g. conveying suitable degrees of formality, directness and so on.
- *Strategic competence* enables language users to resort to verbal and non-verbal communication strategies when there is a risk of communication breakdown due to e.g. lack of words.
- *Discourse competence* enables speakers to engage in continuous discourse, e.g. by linking ideas in longer written texts, maintaining longer spoken turns, participating in interaction, opening conversations and closing them.

In the 1990s, Lyle Bachman (1990) and Lyle Bachman together with Adrian Palmer (1996) developed a model of communicative competence that was based on the research done in the 1980s. The central characteristic of the Bachman and Palmer model (1996) is language ability, which consists of language knowledge and strategic competence. Language knowledge is divided into two complementary components: organizational knowledge (grammatical and textual features) and pragmatic knowledge (functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge). In Bachman and Palmer’s model (1996) strategic knowledge has a more prominent role than in the previous models: it is a metacognitive ability which controls the use of language knowledge and enables language users to plan, monitor and assess their use of language. In addition, the Bachman and Palmer model takes into account both cognitive and affective schemata in language use.

Concurrently with the preparation of the Bachman and Palmer model, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) were preparing a pedagogical model of communicative competence. Figure 3 compares the two models.

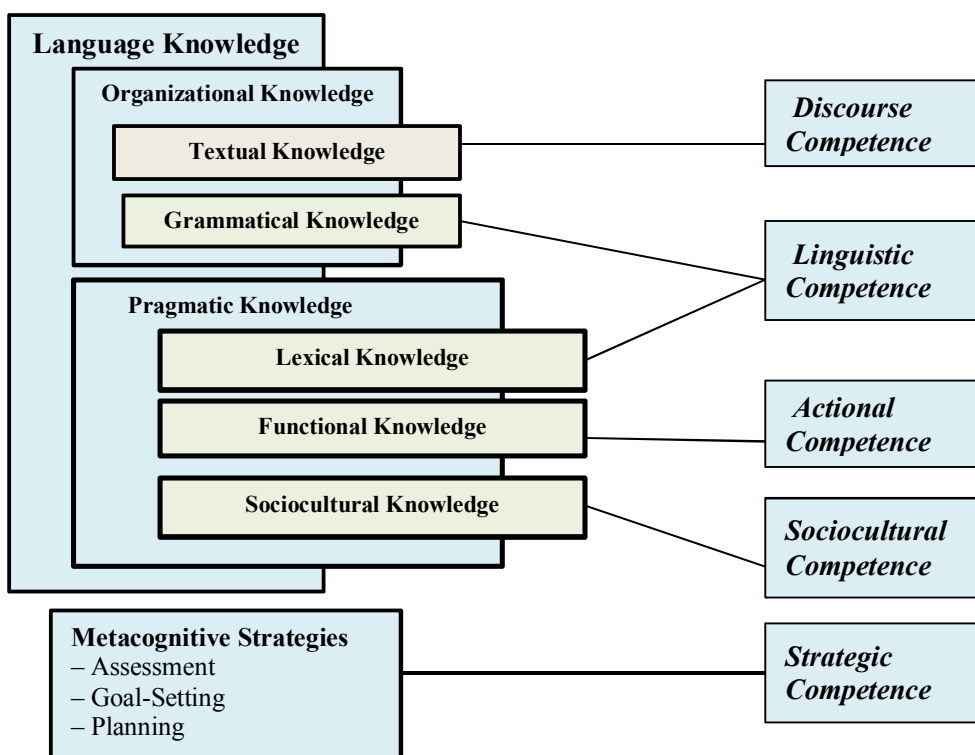


Figure 3. Comparison of Celce-Murcia et al. model with Bachman and Palmer model (Celce-Murcia et al. 1995, p. 12)

Celce-Murcia et al.'s model is an explicitly pedagogical one and differs from the Bachman and Palmer model which appears to be more suited for assessment purposes than for teaching. The main differences are in the role of lexis and in the subcomponent of pragmatic knowledge, functional or actional competence. Celce-Murcia et al. see lexis and grammar as inseparable from each other. They treat lexis and grammar together as "lexico-grammar" and view them as components of linguistic competence. In Bachman's (1990) model, vocabulary was part of grammatical competence together with grammar and discourse, whereas in Bachman and Palmer's model (1996) lexis is seen related to meaning and sociocultural context and as part of pragmatic knowledge. Celce-Murcia et al.'s actional competence is divided into knowledge of language functions (interpersonal exchange, information, opinions, feelings, suasion, problems and future scenarios) and knowledge of speech act sets. (Celce-Murcia et al. 1995, p. 20). One example of a speech act set is "apology speech act set". It consists of five elements; of which two are obligatory: *expressing an apology* and *expressing responsibility*, and three are optional: *offering an explanation*, *offering repair*, and *promising nonrecurrence*. (Celce-Murcia et al 1995, p. 21) A language learner needs to be aware of the combinations of speech acts, their patterns, sequences and contexts in order to be able to use them appropriately.

Concurrently with the Bachman and Palmer and Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell working on their models of communicative competence, the Common

European Framework of Reference (CEFR) was being drafted. Its 1994 draft (CC-LANG (94) 23, 1994, p.2) contains an illustration of communicative use of language (Figure 4). The figure is an early representation of the conceptualization of communicative competence of the CEFR. All communication takes place in context and is constrained by the conditions of various domains. Language users' communicative intentions are realized by means of strategies that activate relevant schemata to operate language activities. If a spoken utterance or a written text is the input, receptive processes and strategies are activated resulting in understanding the text. The interpretation of the message will then form the basis of consecutive action, production of language. Communication is viewed as a dynamic process.

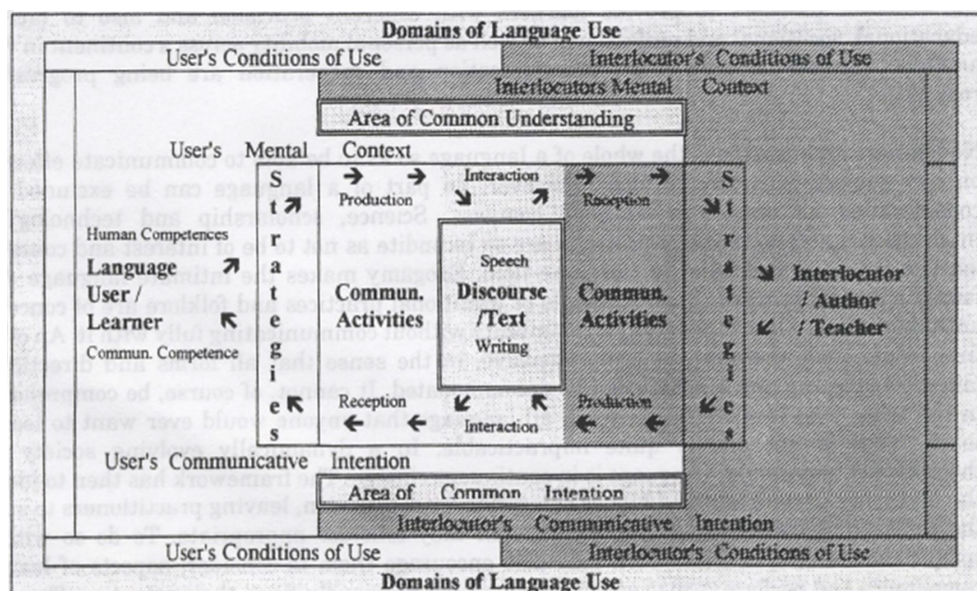


Figure 4. Communicative use of language (CC-LANG (94) 23, 1994, P.2)

More recently, intercultural communication has been added to the discussion about the conceptualization of communicative competence. According to Littlewood (2011, p. 546), *sociocultural competence* includes awareness of the cultural knowledge and assumptions that affect the exchange of meanings and may lead to misunderstandings in intercultural communication. Earlier, a similar idea was expressed in Tella and Harjanne (2008) who argue that communicative language proficiency represents a current strong signal in foreign/ second language education, or even more widely of intercultural or transcultural language proficiency which includes crossing different cultural boundaries when exchanging ideas and experiences with people from near and afar. This holistic view on language proficiency takes into account the real life language use situations where listening, speaking, reading and writing also interact and intertwine. Here, CLT can be seen as being appropriate for second language learning where the subject matter of second language teaching is not only grammar or functions, but the content has con-

nection with life outside the classroom/cultures. Therefore, an integrated approach of the kind advocated by CLT appears to be most supportive of ESL students' achievement of this competence.

This clarification represents a shift from the narrow and widely promoted concepts—communicative competence (CC) and intercultural competence (IC). However, Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has emerged as a more holistic concept embracing the two that are interpreted and defined in many different and overlapping ways. Byram defines intercultural communicative competence as a very comprehensive competence including communicative (Byram: linguistic) competence (CC) and intercultural competence (IC) Byram (2002, cited in Harjanne & Tella, 2012). The intercultural dimension of communicative competence includes knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation between 'the world of origin' of the L2 student and the 'world of the target community', which produces an intercultural awareness enriched by awareness of a wider range of cultures than those carried by the learner's L1 and L2. Intercultural awareness also covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes (CEFR, 2001, p. 103).

Breidbach (2011) argues that 'the socio-critical and political dimension, an original element within the concept of communicative competence has gradually been lost through the increasing functionalist interpretation of communication and the conceptualisation of competence according to testability' and that in this context language is viewed as a tool to work the mechanics of communication rendering the scope of the cultural content in language education restricted to specific national contexts leaving the students' communicative options somewhat limited.

To this assertion, Breidbach adds one more challenge 'the dissatisfaction with CLT can be explained through the loss of a critical, or reflexive dimension in the underlying concept of communicative competence as it had gone through a process of pragmatification and leaving it open to reductionist pedagogies (Breidbach, 2011). Breidbach (2011, pp.105–106), therefore, argues for a reflexive dimension in CLT which requires that student-centred language teaching methods be informed by student-centred pedagogies. Additionally, CLT needs to develop spaces for student participation with a focus on how students relate to the world through the foreign/second language they learn. In fact, designers need to create authentic communicative tasks which support students' intercultural communicative competence. It should be noted that tasks — both authentic and pedagogic (CEFR, 2001; Brown, 2007; Skehan, 2007) require understanding, negotiation of meaning and expressing thoughts to reach a communicative goal.

In some contexts, but by no means in all, there are ample resources for communicative tasks are in large supply in students' environment—linguistic and social. If these affordances (linguistic and social) are context sensitive, it allows students to bring their experiences and contents into practice, which results in authentic communication and spontaneity in conversations. It may be useful to ask what possibilities exist when it comes to implementing immediate classroom actions.

4.1.3 The Communicative Method

As discussed in section 2.3, a method can be described at the approach, design and procedure level. The term ‘method’ can also mean a coherent set of links between the actions of a teacher in a classroom and the thoughts that underlie the actions (Larsen Freeman & Anderson 2011). Though CLT lacks prescribed classroom techniques, meaning that classroom practices differ widely, it is fair to say that there is a theoretical base and principles which inform the choice of classroom techniques. At the *approach level*, the underlying theory of language teaching is to enable students to communicate in the target language. To do this, students need knowledge of grammar, meanings and functions; they should also understand the social context in which communication takes place, including the role relationships, the relationship of the participants and the communicative purpose for their interaction (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Freeman & Anderson 2011). I agree with Larsen Freeman and Anderson (2011) that communication is a *process* and knowledge of the forms of language is insufficient because students must use this knowledge and take into consideration the social situation in order to convey the intended meaning appropriately⁶.

According to this *communicative* dimension of language teaching, it can be said that elements of an underlying ‘theory’ for second language can be discerned because almost everything that is done in the classroom is accomplished with a communicative intent. The teacher, therefore, facilitates communication in the classroom through activities such as games, dialogues and role-plays, conversation and discussion sessions, negotiation of meaning and problem-solving tasks. Though the range of exercise types and activities compatible with a communicative approach is unlimited, activities that are truly communicative according to Johnson and Morrow (1981, as cited in Freeman & Anderson, 2011) have three features in common: *information gap*, *choice* and *feedback*. An information gap exists when one person in an exchange knows something the other person does not. Therefore, if the teacher and student both know that today is ‘Friday’ and the teacher asks the student ‘what day is today’ and the student answers ‘Friday’ their exchange is not really communicative. The question is a *display* question, a question the teacher uses to ask students to display what they know, but it is not a question that asks the student to give information that the teacher does not know (Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p.122).

In communication, the student has a choice of what he says and how he says it. If exercises are tightly controlled, so that students can only say something in one way, the speaker has no choice and the exchange, therefore is not communicative. In a chain drill, for example, if a student must reply to her neighbour’s question in the same way that was replied to someone else’s question, then she has no choice of form and content, and real communication does not occur (Brown, 2007; Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p.122).

True communication is purposeful. A speaker can thus evaluate whether or not her purpose has been achieved based upon the information she receives from the listener. If the listener does not have an opportunity to provide the speaker with

⁶ Phatic communion and ritualistic language use

such feedback, then the exchange is not really communicative. Forming questions through a transformation drill may be a worthwhile activity, but it is not in keeping with CLT since a speaker will receive no response from a listener. She is thus unable to assess whether her question has been understood or not (Freeman & Anderson 2011, pp. 122–123).

It is important that the *design* of the communicative activities ultimately include the use of authentic materials to give students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used in contexts outside the classroom (Spada, 2007; Littlewood, 2011). A newspaper article can be used for students with high proficiency while students with lower proficiency in the target language can be assigned simpler authentic materials such as the use of weather forecasts when working on predictions, realia that do not contain a lot of language, but about which a lot of discussion can be generated, menus in the target language and timetables, etc. Additionally, students can be given a passage in which the sentences appear in scrambled order. This may be a passage they have worked on or one they have not seen before. Students are told to unscramble the sentences so as to restore them to their original order. This type of exercise teaches students about cohesion and coherence properties of language and they learn how sentences are bound together at the supersentential level through formal and linguistic devices such as pronouns, which make a text cohesive and semantic propositions which unify a text and make it coherent. Students can also put the pictures of a picture strip story in order to write lines to accompany the pictures.

Role-plays are also very important in CLT because they give students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles structured and less structured. Preferably the latter as it is more in keeping with the CLT: for example, the teacher tells the students who they are, what the situation is and what they are talking about but students determine what they will say. This gives students more of a choice because they will determine what to say. More so, small groups of students interacting are favoured in order to maximise time allotted to each student for communicating (Richards & Rodgers 2001, Brown, 2007; Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

The teacher acts as facilitator of communication in the classroom and is responsible for establishing situations likely to promote communication. She also acts as an independent participant in the teaching–studying–learning process, a resource organiser, a guide in the classroom activities, a needs analyst, counsellor and advisor (Richards & Rodgers 2001). However, the teacher recognises that students are communicators and they should actively engage in negotiating meaning—in trying to make themselves understood—even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete (Freeman & Anderson 2011). Since it is impossible and unnecessary to agree on a particular procedure for a Communicative classroom, there are, however, important issues pertaining to the *interactional pattern/procedure* in the classroom and the techniques. The nature of the student–teacher interaction is such that during the lesson the teacher presents some part of the lesson, at other times she is facilitator of activities and sometimes she is co-communicator, but more often than not, she facilitates the communication process

between all students in the classroom and between students and the various activities and texts.

Students, however, interact a great deal with one another and contribute to communicative activities such as group work exercises, pairs and triads. During such activities, teachers give students the opportunity to express their individual ideas by having them share their opinions on a regular basis. Students also work on all four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) from the beginning. Finally, the teacher evaluates the students' accuracy and fluency through the use of integrative tests which have real communicative function. It is interesting to note that 'the student who has the most control of the structures and vocabulary is not always the best communicator' (Freeman & Anderson 2011 p. 125). Thus errors are tolerated during fluency-based activities and considered as a natural outcome of the communicative process, since students can have limited linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators. The teacher notes the errors during fluency activities and returns to them later with an accuracy-based activity. As earlier stated by Brown (2007) and Littlewood (2011), there is no single agreed upon version of CLT, which means classroom practices differ widely. Even when teachers report they are practicing CLT, the inherent flexibility of this approach has also resulted in misunderstanding and confusion (Spada, 2007).

The study by Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) involving 10 teachers of Japanese in Australia concluded that teachers had four different conceptions of CLT a) CLT is about learning to communicate in the second language; b) CLT uses mainly speaking and listening ; c) CLT involves little grammar instruction; d) CLT uses activities that are time consuming. The study showed that teachers' classroom practices emphasised the more traditional teacher-centred teaching with focus on grammar teaching, features not consistent with CLT approaches.

Another exploratory study by Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood, and Son (2004) documents one teacher's personal practical theory of CLT of German as a second language in Australia and also gives detailed insight into the teacher's understanding of CLT and how well she incorporated this approach in her second language teaching. Through data analysis from observations, semi-structured/in-depth and stimulated recall interviews, the teacher in Mangubhai et al's study expressed her practical theory in line with features commonly listed in texts about CLT approaches. For example, the goal of developing students' communicative competence, a commitment to using foreign language as a medium for classroom communication as much as possible, an emphasis on language use rather than language knowledge, use of authentic materials, teachers serving more as participants and facilitators, students being actively involved in interpretation, expression and negotiation of meaning etc. The study showed that the teacher's practical theory was an amalgam of many features of the CLT approaches and of general teaching. However, some components of her theory were not generally discussed in the CLT literature.

To date, relatively few studies of how well teachers understand and use CLT teaching approaches appears to have been undertaken (Karavas-Doukas, 1996). Moreover, studies tend to be small scale and to have been scattered across a number of different contexts (Mangubhai et al., 2004). The fact remains that:

CLT is ‘fuzzy’ in teachers’ understanding. This fuzziness has given CLT a flexibility which has allowed it to endure for thirty years. However, its flexibility also means that classroom practices differ widely even when teachers report that they are practicing CLT. (Freeman and Anderson 2011, p. 115).

From the point of view of this study and in line with Prahbu (1990), *there is no best method* because the issue is not methods but how they are used, since methods are shaped by a teacher’s own understanding, beliefs and level of experience. Freeman and Anderson (2011) concur that implementation of a method is affected by the teacher, students, institutional demands and factors connected to the sociocultural contexts in which teaching takes place. Furthermore, what is needed in language teaching is not a universal solution, but a ‘shift to localisation’ in which pedagogic practices are designed in relation to local contexts, needs and objectives. I agree with Prabhu and Freeman & Anderson on this view.

To my way of thinking, since CLT is itself an approach to language teaching, and it is not well defined, in this study, I prefer to combine the five core elements when describing a teachers’ approach proposed in the **MAKER Framework** by Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004): (*Method, Awareness of students, Knowledge of content, Ends that describe the purposes and ideal for teaching and the Relationship that exist between the teacher and the students*—**MAKER**. From this analysis a teacher’s classroom and her approach to teaching and role in the ESL lesson can be described in more systematic ways—as **Executive, Facilitator or Liberationist** (Fenstermacher and Soltis, 2004). The use of this framework can deepen our understanding of a teacher’s classroom methods. Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004) frame it this way:

Another value of the MAKER framework is that all the elements are under your control. For example, you make the decision of how thorough your understanding of *Method* will be; you also decide on the various skills and techniques you will employ in the classroom. You have the option to decide how *Aware* you will become of the life experiences and character of your students and how this understanding will affect your teaching. You have control over how thoroughly prepared you will be ...and how you will represent *Knowledge* to your students. You have considerable freedom to adopt *Ends* for your teaching, and to pursue them in your classroom. Finally, the kind of *Relationship* that you have with your students and how this Relationship complements or detracts from your efforts is very much up to you.

In other words, the issue of how a method is used comes to focus because the teacher who uses some principles of CLT adopts an approach/role which is then described as Executive, Facilitative, Liberationist or Communicative. This idea or classification is not, in fact, new in language research Kumaravadivelu’s (2003) description (Table 4) of the teacher as passive technician; reflective practitioner and transformative intellectual expresses the same ideas as the MAKER framework. All the same, I prefer the MAKER description for its focus on the core elements common to teaching followed by the elaboration of teacher roles. Its authors also are internationally recognised authorities in educational theory and philoso-

phy. In the following, I will draw substantially on the formulation of MAKER by the two authors.

Table 4. Teachers' different roles based on Kumaravadivelu (2003).

	Teachers as passive technicians	Teachers as Reflective Practitioners	Teachers as transformative intellectuals
Primary role of teacher	Conduit	Facilitator	Change agents
Primary source of Knowledge	Professional knowledge +empirical research by experts	Professional knowledge +teachers personal knowledge +guided action research by teachers	Professional knowledge +teacher's personal knowledge+ self-exploratory research by teacher
Primary goal of teaching	Maximising content knowledge through prescribed activities	All above+ maximising learning potential through problem-solving	All above + maximising socio political awareness through problem-posing activities
Primary orientation of teaching	Discrete Approach anchored in the discipline	Integrated Approach anchored in the classroom	Holistic Approach anchored in the society
Primary players in the teaching process(in rank order)	Experts + Teachers	Teachers +Experts +Learners	Teachers +Learners +Experts +community activist

In the MAKER framework, the teacher as *Executive* places emphasis on **M** and **K** (methods of teaching and knowledge of subject matter). Through cues, corrective feedback and reinforcement, the *executive* increases the percentage of engaged time relative to allocated time. They also include such techniques as monitoring seatwork, reducing idle chatter, maintaining a down-to-business atmosphere, and providing students with easy comfortable means to signal their confusion with the material dealt with. Cues are like signposts and maps; the teacher uses them to alert students to what is to be learned and how to go about learning it. Teachers quickly deal with errors in written or oral work, and reinforcement ranges from feedback on assignments to such tangible rewards as food, toys or money. There is also efficient and effective management of classroom processes. Knowledge (**K**) is typically treated as something 'out there': it appears in textbooks, workbooks and learning aids, as outlined in the curriculum. The teacher manages complex and instructional processes that enable the student to acquire (**K**) from such sources as texts, films, the internet, workbooks teacher presentations and discussions (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004, pp. 11–18).

Although not ignored, **A**, **E** and **R**, are given less attention in the MAKER model. Rather, they are studied as instrumental elements, i.e. as elements whose values rest on what they might contribute to the students' learning of K. As such there is not a lot of discussion within the *executive* approach about coming to know one's students well (**A**), or about establishing strong and powerful bonds between teacher and students (**R**). Ends (**E**) are merged with **K** by asserting that the proper

end of education is for the student to acquire K. Even so, Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004, p. 58) contend that the strength of this approach is that it provides a straightforward means to move some specified knowledge from a source (for example a book, teacher or computer) to the mind of the student.

According to MAKER, the teacher as *Facilitator* places a great deal of emphasis on students as persons, in the sense that she encourages and nurtures the growth of students. The *facilitator* does not raise subject matter knowledge to the most prominent position in the range of educational outcomes. However, the teacher does value subject matter knowledge, but less for its own sake and more for the contributions it makes to the growth of her students. The teacher believes that students possess some knowledge and understanding before they start at school, though, these may differ from what is contained in the formal curriculum. However, because they are authentic experiences, acquired through the experience of living, they are very real for those students and vital to their ability to function well in the home, school and peer culture. Thus the key task of teachers is to facilitate the encounter of the world that a child brings to school with the world the school seeks to open to the child. However, facilitation entails not simply becoming aware of the personal histories of one's students, but also helping them use knowledge and understanding they bring to school. Thus Relationships (**R**) is important in the facilitator approach. The facilitator also has *care pedagogy* as its most contemporary variation. Care pedagogy, therefore, assigns **R** the primary position in the MAKER framework, as it grounds the work of the teacher in a fundamental respect for students as persons (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004, p.28).

The teacher as *Liberationist* emphasises ends (**E**) and knowledge (**K**), while method (M), awareness of the student (A) and relationship (R) play a smaller role. The Liberationist approach rooted in notions of liberal education, aims to liberate, to open up the mind to wonder, to know and understand, to imagine and create, using the full heritage of civilised life. Like the facilitator, the *liberationist* teaches in order to realise certain ends for the students, while the ends of the liberationist are profoundly shaped by **K**, those of the facilitator are not. Just as the facilitator approach contained a variation (care pedagogy), so does the liberationist approach—(critical pedagogy). Critical pedagogy—a relatively newcomer to English language teaching, focuses on freeing the person/student to act in ways that exemplify high principles of human welfare with its strong orientation to social and political action (Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Brown (2007, p.512) notes that 'those of us who teach languages may indeed have a special responsibility to subvert attitudes and beliefs and assumptions that ultimately impede the attainment of such goals as equality, justice, freedom, and opportunity'. Table 5 summarises the approaches using the MAKER Framework.

Table 5. Summary of the approaches using the MAKER Framework (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004, p.58)

	Executive	Facilitator	Liberationist
Dominant	Method (M) Knowledge (K)	Awareness (A) Ends (E)	Knowledge (K) Ends (E)**
Recessive	Awareness (A) Ends (E) Relationships (R)	Method (M) Knowledge (K) Relationships (R)*	Method (M) Awareness (A) Relationships (R)

* Care Pedagogy adds R to the dominant elements

** Emancipatory teaching alters some liberationist ends and changes the way K is pursued by students.

4.2 Principles of the Didactic Teaching–Studying–Learning Process

The principles of the didactic teaching–studying–learning process (discussed in some detail above), have usually tended to focus on foreign language teaching. However, to my way of thinking, similar principles hold true when discussing second language teaching. In the last fifty years or so, there is a consensus that second language teaching–studying–learning is an extremely complex phenomenon and has been explained differently by theorists and language experts within the field of language pedagogy. In the research literature, it was early well-established that language teaching methods had to be justified in terms of an underlying theory. The writings of the language teaching experts in the 1950s and 1960s include serious considerations of learning theory, as preliminaries to their practical recommendations (e.g. Fries & Lado, 1960; Rivers, 1981; Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Theories from the behaviourist to the communicative and recently the sociocultural all seek to explain how successful language teaching–studying–learning is accomplished. From these theories, practical recommendations are suggested which shape classroom pedagogies. I consider it important to discuss theories that underlie second language teaching since this study focuses on teachers’ conceptions of teaching English as a second language. It is also important to remember that as professionals, teachers should link theory and practice in a sufficiently close relationship to be able to resolve everyday teaching problems on the basis of theoretical knowledge. I will also focus on second language theories that are holistic.

CLT—the most pedagogically influential approach to arrive at the second/foreign language scene is underlined by theoretical rationales since the 1970s. The communicative approach to language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication. Hymes (1972) is usually considered to be the first to explicate the goal of language teaching in terms of “communicative competence”. Hymes theory of communicative competence was a definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Four dimensions of communicative competence in a second language are outlined in the work of Canale and Swain (1980), with a fifth dimension by Littlewood (2011): Linguistic competence discourse competence, prag-

matic competence, sociolinguistic competence, sociocultural competence (section 4.1.2).

As explained earlier (see section 4.1.1) Intercultural Communicative Competence is more recent and includes the concept of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Competence. ICC offers broader implications for current conceptions of second language proficiency.

The approach advocated by Hymes and supported by the cognitive turn in psychology encourages other theorists to present models and formulate hypotheses of how students learn second languages. This direction was increasingly seen as a new discipline, SLA, second language acquisition research.

Krashen (1982) claimed in his *Input Hypothesis* that L2 development would be more successful if the conditions for L2 acquisition were more similar to those of L1 acquisition. The way to accomplish this is to expose the students to meaningful and motivating input that is just slightly beyond their current level of linguistic competence ($i + 1$) but sufficiently comprehensible for the student to understand (Krashen 1984b, cited in Spada, 2007, p. 274). To test empirically how input becomes comprehensible to the student, Long (1983) hypothesised that conversational modifications (e.g. clarification requests, confirmation checks) that students make when they interact create comprehensible input and this in turn promotes acquisition. The *Comprehensible Input hypothesis* and the *Interaction Hypothesis* have been highly influential in shaping and supporting CLT. However, differences with other theories centre on the role of interaction.

Interaction can be seen as a crucial strong signal in current views of foreign/second language teaching–studying–learning (Harjanne & Tella, 2008). This view is discussed in the sociocultural theory of language learning (drawing on the work of Vygotsky in particular). According to Sociocultural Theory, humans are fundamentally communicatively organised beings in social relationships.

Just as our social activity is mediated through speech, so too is our mental activity. Specifically through speaking (and writing) we are able to gain control over our memory, attention, planning, perception, learning and development, but this control is derived from the social activity we engage in not only with our contemporaries but also with those who have preceded us in time through cultural artifacts, including language, they have created and left behind. (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008)

Interaction, therefore, is regarded as crucial in the learning of a second language and according to the sociocultural view we learn a second language in interaction. From the point of view of the participation metaphor (Donato, 2000) interaction relates to learning in a direct way (van Lier, 2000). In a ‘communicative classroom’ tasks are needed which make students negotiate meaning and according to the Sociocultural view the role of the teacher in providing scaffolding becomes critical. The teacher or a more capable peer through collaborative and supportive dialogue in a dialogic interaction makes the task easier and develops and maintains the students’ interest and goal towards the task. According to van Lier (2007),

pedagogical scaffolding is a pedagogical tool that is supportive as well as autonomy-supporting, which consists of

- *Continuity* (task repetition, connections, variation)
- *Contextual support* (a safe, supportive environment)
- *Intersubjectivity* (mutual engagement, encouragement)
- *Contingency* (task procedures, the teacher's actions depending on the learners' actions)
- *Handover/takeover* (a growing role for the learner, attending to emergent skills and knowledge)
- *Flow* (skills and challenges are in balance, participants are in "tune" with each other (p. 59).

Research results (Donato & McCormick, 1994; Ohta, 2000; Many et al., 2009; Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2012) conclude that interaction as pedagogical scaffolding covers a wide field in the second language teaching–studying–learning process. Therefore, scaffolding provided by a real expert, a mentor or a language teacher is indispensable in a second language classroom (Harjanne & Tella, 2008). As discussed in section 2.2, the expert (for example the language teacher) considers the students ZPD, therefore in interaction; the novice (student) is treated not as a repeater but a communicative being. Therefore in the teaching–studying–learning process interaction should be both instructional and communicative.

Since the teacher's aim in the didactic model is to support students' studying, it follows that the teacher is able to mould the learning process by incorporating theoretical knowledge to support pedagogical actions. According to the didactic model, a) intentionality, b) cultural context, c) content, and d) methods will be acknowledged and represented in classroom teaching and will shape the whole didactic T–S–L process. Justification of teaching approaches will be guided by theoretical principles as well. How teachers teach English in this age of globalisation, the challenges involved with the increasing role of English language are issues I deal with next.

4.3 The English Language in the 21st Century

Mackay (2002, p. 1), among several other experts, holds that interest in learning English has increased to such an extent that English is now considered by many to be an international language in both a global and local sense. This status is possible due to the continuing spread of English, which has also affected how language teaching, language studying and language learning are thought of. Regarding English language teaching, Harjanne and Tella (2008, p.58) strongly maintain that foreign/second languages can be much more than a medium of instruction rather, they are *empowering mediators* and 'language is seen to enhance, amplify and strengthen in many ways a human being's mental, social and interactive capacity to work, communicate and act.' Consequently, this encourages language users to pay more conscious attention to the role, significance and potential of foreign/second languages. From an empowering mediator point of view, therefore, language is an

interfacing facilitator between one language and the culture embedded in it, and another language and culture (See also Mackay, 2002).

It is this current strong signal and holistic perspective which this study adopts when discussing language teaching practices. I agree with Harjanne and Tella (2008) that this metaphor of empowering mediator encourages language users to pay more conscious attention to the role, significance and potential of second/foreign languages. As argued in the current study, a change of attitude towards language should have an effect on how language teaching, studying and learning should be thought of. However, I argue that a much wider, empowering and '*strong version*' of the Communicative Approach, i.e. *Critical Pedagogy* represented by the participatory approach in the spirit of, say, Freeman and Anderson (2011) should be the goal for second language pedagogy. Critical pedagogy problematizes commonsense assumptions of language teaching and challenges language teachers to select real-life issues from students' lives and engage them in an open-ended process of problem solving.

Teachers typically want their students to be empowered to use language they are learning in order to solve problems in their lives. While this is an ambitious goal, teachers can contribute to meeting it. The view that language is a medium of instruction is no longer enough (Harjanne & Tella, 2008); teachers are not merely teaching language as a neutral vehicle for the expression of meaning. Nonetheless, 'what you should do about critical pedagogy should not be determined by someone else, who may be unfamiliar with your teaching context or your own political orientation' (Freeman & Anderson, 2011, pp. 165–179).

The current trends in ELT have reflected this reality. According to Mackay (2002), the relationship between language and culture needs to be examined with reference to three areas of language learning and teaching: the teaching of discourse competence, the use of cultural materials in the classroom, and the cultural assumptions that inform teaching methods. According to this socio-cultural view, language has intellectual and social significance since it is a primary mediator of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). This tends to reflect, to a certain extent, the departure from the emphasis on the native speaker norms to a more complex and expanding cultures in language teaching and the increasing awareness of the target language (English) being increasingly a lingua franca in international communication. In fact, Tollefson (2000, cited in Pennycook, 2010) suggests that the economic value of the language translates directly into greater opportunities in education, business and employment, hence for those who do not have access to high quality English language education, the spread of English presents a formidable obstacle to education, employment, and other activities requiring English proficiency.

4.4 Challenges of ELT in the Era of Globalisation

Pennycook (2010, p.116) claims that English is a language 'embedded in the process of globalisation'. At this point in history, Swan (2010) aptly observes that 'we are witnessing accelerating globalisation, mass movements of peoples and increasing intercultural communication on an unprecedented scale' (p.124).

Indeed, social and international communication has necessitated the use of a global means of communication in the world. English has thus fulfilled this need as a language of international communication (Mackay, 2002). Therefore, the vitality of English in this era of globalisation produces more changes and challenges to the established pedagogies of English teaching. It may be asked what the goal of English language teaching in the age of information and globalisation is. To develop students' sociocultural competence (Littlewood, 2011) or to use the more popular term, intercultural/transcultural communicative language proficiency (CEFR, 2001; Byram, 2010), is all too easy an answer, simple enough to be on the lips of everyone concerned but tough enough to engage scholars worldwide in search of the true nature of English language education and an agenda that best reflects this nature (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). With regards to English language education as second or foreign language, this search seems even more challenging and inviting at the same time.

The fact is that non-native English language speakers have already outnumbered its native speakers. Crystal (2003, p. 69) estimates the ratio of native to-non-native is around 1:3 taking into account the large scale acquisition of English in EFL contexts. Based on this, we need to operate with a more open attitude to forms and flows of popular culture because the local use of English in different contexts cannot be so simply reduced to the erosion of difference. To the extent that appropriate use of language teaching methodology is based on culturally influenced discourse, the question of whose discourse rules to apply in the use of EIL will be problematic. With the proliferation of new approaches and methods in the 20th century, the changing role of teachers, and the changing profile of English speakers, it would be unrealistic to expect that fragmented teaching of English holds out promise of social and economic development to all those who learn it (Pennycook, 2010).

More so, it has been argued that English is a language which creates barriers as much as possibilities of development. The questions provoked by this fact are: what are the dynamics that are at work in foreign or second language education? How can we empower students with the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of different cultures, accents and way of life? What is the role of second language educators? These questions and many others of the kind point at complexities of English language teaching. Engaging in context-specific teaching practices and implementing methods consistent with the local culture of learning together with studying what teachers do; how they think and feel about their work and the cultural contexts in which their work is embedded must be taken into account and will start to play more relevant role in today's transcultural communications (Pennycook, 2010).

In this study, I intend to make a modest contribution to this 'cosmopolitan conversation' (Littlewood, 2011) about language pedagogy by describing, analysing and interpreting secondary school teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching ESL in Cameroon, justification of their teaching methods and how they support students' study processes. My hope is that by doing this I might be able to help create new understandings of these existing challenges by including the perspectives of ESL teachers in Cameroon.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed second language teaching in the framework of Communicative Language Teaching, followed by a discussion of its principles for second language classroom. Additionally, the significance of the shift of CLT from Communicative Competence to Intercultural Competence and recently to Intercultural Communicative Competence was discussed. It also emphasised the responsibility of L2 teachers to notice the social and linguistic affordances as resources for communicative language activities that enable students enrich their awareness of a wider range of cultures.

In this chapter, I argue like several other researchers have done, that there is no best method because the issue is not methods but how they are used. All the same, I recognise that knowledge of teaching methods is a source of options and a basis for eclecticism in the classroom and that teachers' need to reflect on their methods and their appropriateness within specific contexts. In fact, as Freeman and Anderson (2011) suggest, what is needed in language teaching is not a universal solution, but a 'shift to localisation' in which pedagogic practices are designed in relation to local contexts, needs and objectives. Because I also argue that teachers are professionals, and need to make decisions in the didactic teaching–studying–learning process guided by theoretical principles, I devoted the next section to this topic. I recognise that noticing affordances and providing pedagogical scaffolding/support and justifying pedagogical decisions in this didactic T–S–L process are important from the point of view of the current study. I conclude that teaching English in this age of globalisation challenges teachers and users to pay conscious attention to the role, significance and potential of second languages. Figure 5 therefore gives a summary of the theoretical underpinnings of this study.

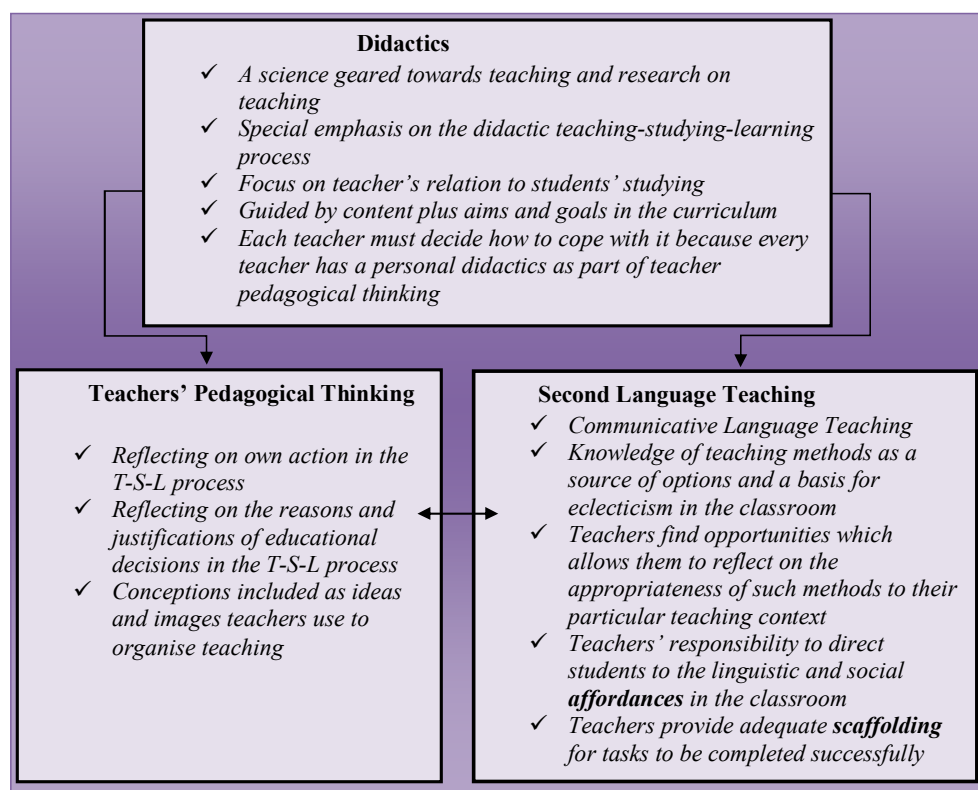


Figure 5. The relations and interaction between didactics, teacher pedagogical thinking and second language teaching

The idea is that the teaching of English can be researched within the theoretical framework of Didactics, which defines the core of a teachers' profession as focusing on the relationship between the content and students' studying, and which recognises that during this interaction, the teacher needs to reflect on her L2 teaching and give reasons and justifications of her educational decisions usually based on a knowledge of methods and their appropriateness in the context of teaching.

5 Educational, Linguistic and Socio-Political Overview of Cameroon

This section introduces the context in which this study was carried out. First, it presents the educational context, followed by a general overview and research on the pre- and post-colonial periods and their influence on language education, especially English language teaching, to explicate how ESL teaching is adapted to socio-political mandates. The linguistic context and the current status-quo of ESL are also traced in order to better understand how the role of English changed, and how emphasis shifted to communicative methodology.

5.1 Educational Context

The current organizational structure of education in Cameroon has been influenced by two periods in its history—*pre-colonial* and *colonial*. These periods are considered very important in the history of language and education in Cameroon. During the pre-colonial era (1844–1884) education was considered the traditional duty of the family as parents became the children's role model. The focus of traditional, indigenous education was not on academic accumulation of factual knowledge; rather, education included the moral and intellectual awareness developed through engagement in social activities. Therefore, pre-colonial education integrated the individual into his societal context and enabled him to become responsible and also interdependent with the other members of the society (Atayo, 2000). This traditional structure of education continued until around 1844 when the British Baptist missionaries established Cameroon's first primary school in Bimbia, a coastal village.

Missionaries played two major functions in shaping the educational set-up 1) introducing Christianity and 2) introducing the Western form of schooling. This Western schooling ushered a new educational context and included knowledge that was distinct from that of indigenous education. This formal medium of education served as the main instrument to spread the gospel, as graduates from mission schools began to serve as school and church leaders. Missionaries used the local language in teaching since they found it an effective way to spread their gospel message. They also translated the bible into the vernacular. (Atayo, 2000; Ihims, 2003)

The colonial era in education began with German annexation of Cameroon in 1884. From *1884 to 1960*, when Cameroon gained its independence, Cameroon was ruled by three colonial powers—Germany, Britain and France. During the approximately 30 years of German colonial administration in Cameroon, mission education continued its growth, and they continued to use indigenous languages in education. By 1914, mission schools increased to 625 with enrolment of just over 40,000 students. The German colonial administration on the contrary set up only four government primary schools by 1913 with an enrolment of 833 (Ihims, 2003). The German colonial administration was slow and not enthusiastic about expand-

ing education in Cameroon. Atayo (2000) contends that Germany did not want to become over-burdened by heavy financial colonial involvements; mission schools produced enough graduates to fulfil their needs. The German rule in Cameroon ended in 1916 following the defeat of German forces in this country after World War 1. Cameroon was then partitioned into two unequal parts—France annexed 70% and Britain the remaining 30%.

The arrival of Britain and France shaped and continues to shape most of the practices and decisions in the educational structure of Cameroon. Therefore, from 1916–1960, two different educational systems were put in place by two distinct colonial powers present in this territory. The colonial styles of these two masters contrasted sharply. French colonial style was highly centralised. In fact, French colonial education policy for Africa and Cameroon was for *assimilation*. The aim was to replace the African culture with French culture, language and civilization. This even meant that all important governmental decisions on education were made in France; for example, structuring of programmes in terms of content, pedagogical practices, examination and certification were patterned along what was valid in France (Atayo, 2000). It is no surprise that the language situation in French-speaking Cameroon during the colonial period was characterised by perpetual language conflict between missionaries who persisted in the use of indigenous languages and the French colonial administration (Bitja'a & Zachee, 1999). Nonetheless, this administration instituted a special subvention for schools that used French as the language of instruction and consequently those schools using local languages were forced to shut down (Ngoh, 1996).

The British colonial administration was highly decentralised as the authorities relied on the missionaries to fulfil educational needs in the colony. Ngoh (1988) points out that education was not vigorously pursued by the British colonial administration and the education policy aimed at training temporary civil servants for colonial exploitation in various circumstances. Though working from different premises, the two colonial administrations shared common characteristics—neither system had more than a handful of secondary schools by the eve of independence in 1960, both systems became involved with supporting infrastructure and educational administration in Cameroon and both neglected serious concerns about language policies in education.

These separate educational systems exist simultaneously to the present time. The English sub-system is intended for the Anglophone population and the French sub-system is serving the Francophone population. The Francophone subsystem and the Anglophone system can co-exist in any part of the country and parents are free to enrol children into any system of their choice. Thus English and French served the colonial regime in administration and education and this was later reinforced when Cameroon gained its independence in 1960.

Currently, there are three ministries in charge of education in Cameroon, 1) Ministry of Basic Education organises Nursery and Primary education, 2) The Ministry of Secondary Education takes charge of Secondary General and Technical education, 3) The Ministry of Higher Education oversees the functioning of the universities and other institutions of higher learning. Education is directed by the state through these ministries that supervise the curriculum and pedagogic activities

in all schools. Education is also organised by public and private owners and there are public and private schools at all levels. Public schools are set up, financed and managed by the State while Private schools are set up, financed and administered by their proprietors with the State only exercising pedagogic control. The state ensures that all end-of-course certificate examinations at all levels in all schools are either directly administered or organised by Examination Boards under its control. Private schools are also organised into agencies: 1) The Catholic Education Agency controls schools set up by the Roman Catholic Church, 2) The Protestant Education Agency controls schools set up by the Protestant Churches, notably the Presbyterian and Baptist churches, 3) The Islamic Education Agency controls schools set up by the Islamic Council of Cameroon 4) Secular Education Agency controls all other private schools set up by non-denominational individuals and groups.

As regard schooling, pre-primary education in this context is not compulsory—owing to its high cost; pre-school education remains the prerogative of a small affluent segment of the population. The Ministry of education allocates 3.3% of its basic budget to formal pre-school education (private and public). The compulsory education age range is 6 to 11 years. Primary education lasts 6 years and is free of charge only in government-owned schools. Teaching is by the class teacher who functions as the subject teacher in some schools. Subject teachers are also used, particularly in computer skills and physical education. Schools operate five days a week and the number of lessons per week varies from 8 to 15, depending on the level of pupils. The maximum number of hours per day during compulsory education ranges from four at the lowest level to six in the higher levels. There are regulations on class sizes especially in private primary schools (45 pupils per class), and children of same age group are taught together.

At the end of six years, students who have successfully completed compulsory education are eligible for general and technical secondary education. Secondary and high school education lasts seven years (see Table 6) and students are expected to sit for various examinations after which they qualify for university studies.

Table 6. The French and English sub-systems in Cameroon secondary schools (based on Echu 2003)

Francophone subsystem			Anglophone subsystem		
Year	Class	Certificate	Year	Class	Certificate
1	Sixième	-	1	Form One	-
2	Cinquième	-	2	Form Two	-
3	Quatrième	-	3	Form Three	-
4	Troisième (end of first cycle)	BEPC ⁷	4	Form Four	-
5	Seconde	-	5	Form Five (end of first cycle)	GCE ⁸ Ordinary Level
6	Première	Probatoire	6	Lower Sixth Form	-
7	Terminale (end of second cycle)	Baccalauréat	7	Upper Sixth Form (end of second cycle)	GCE Advanced Level

As illustrated in Table 6 students between the ages 11–19 complete secondary education within a period of seven years.

5.1.1 Linguistic Context

Research has shown that Cameroon is one of the most multilingual countries in Africa, the countries' close to 19 million inhabitants use some 247 languages (Bitja'a & Zachee, 1999; Boum & Sadembouo, 1999) two official languages (English and French) a few major minority languages, (Pidgin English, Fulfulde, Beti) and two religious languages (Arabic and Pidgin). This distinctively heterogeneous language situation has been explained by the fact that Cameroon is geographically well situated and 'has the singular character of being the one spot on the black continent where all the African peoples meet' (Fonlon, 1969). The Bantu, Sudanese, Fulani, Shuwa Arabs and Pigmies present in Cameroon claim kinship with peoples in neighbouring countries. In addition, among the four major language families in Africa (Afro-Asiatic, Khoisan, Nilo-Saharan and Niger Kordofanian), three are represented in Cameroon (See fig 6).

⁷ BEPC-Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle

⁸ GCE- General certificate of Education

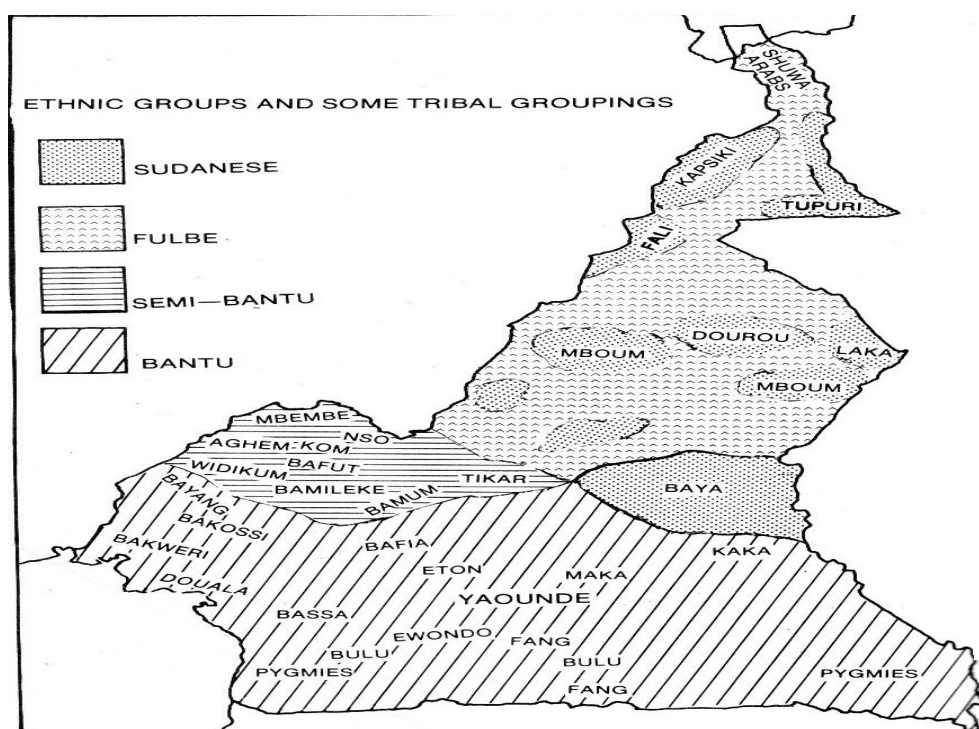


Figure 6. Geographical distribution of the population of Cameroon (based on Neba 1987, p.46)

In addition, the languages of wider communication are Fulfulde, Ewondo, Duala, Hausa, Wandala, Kanuri, Arab Shuwa, Cameroon Pidgin English and French (See table 7). It is also possible to distinguish three lingua franca zones in Cameroon: the Fulfulde lingua franca zone in the north, the Pidgin English lingua franca zone in the West, North West and South West and the French lingua franca zone in the rest of the country (Wolf, 2001) Such division is not rigid as languages overlap across the different zones in terms of usage.

Table 7. Languages of wider communication and regions of use (based on Neba et al. 2006)

Regions	Lingua Franca (s)
<i>Extreme North</i>	Arabic, Wandala, Fulfulde, French
<i>North</i>	Fulfulde, French
<i>Adamawa</i>	Fulfulde
<i>South West</i>	Pidgin
<i>North West</i>	Pidgin
<i>West</i>	Medumba, Munghaka, Pidgin
<i>Centre</i>	Ewondo, French, Pidgin
<i>South</i>	Ewondo, French
<i>East</i>	Ewondo, French
<i>Littoral</i>	French

Fulfulde and Pidgin stand out as widely used languages owing to research findings that argue for raising the status of these lingua francas to pedagogical languages (Kouega, 2002; Neba, Chibaka, & Antindogbe, 2006) . In terms of demographic strength, Fulfulde is spoken by close to 5 million people as a second language, although native speakers are estimated at around 700,000. Speakers of its variants are found in the area stretching from Senegal through Cameroon to Sudan, and are estimated at around 13 million (Ethnologue 2000, 2005). Pidgin is also spoken by 50% of the population and considered a highly appropriate language for adoption as a pedagogical language in cities and other urban centres in Cameroon. (See Neba et al., 2006)

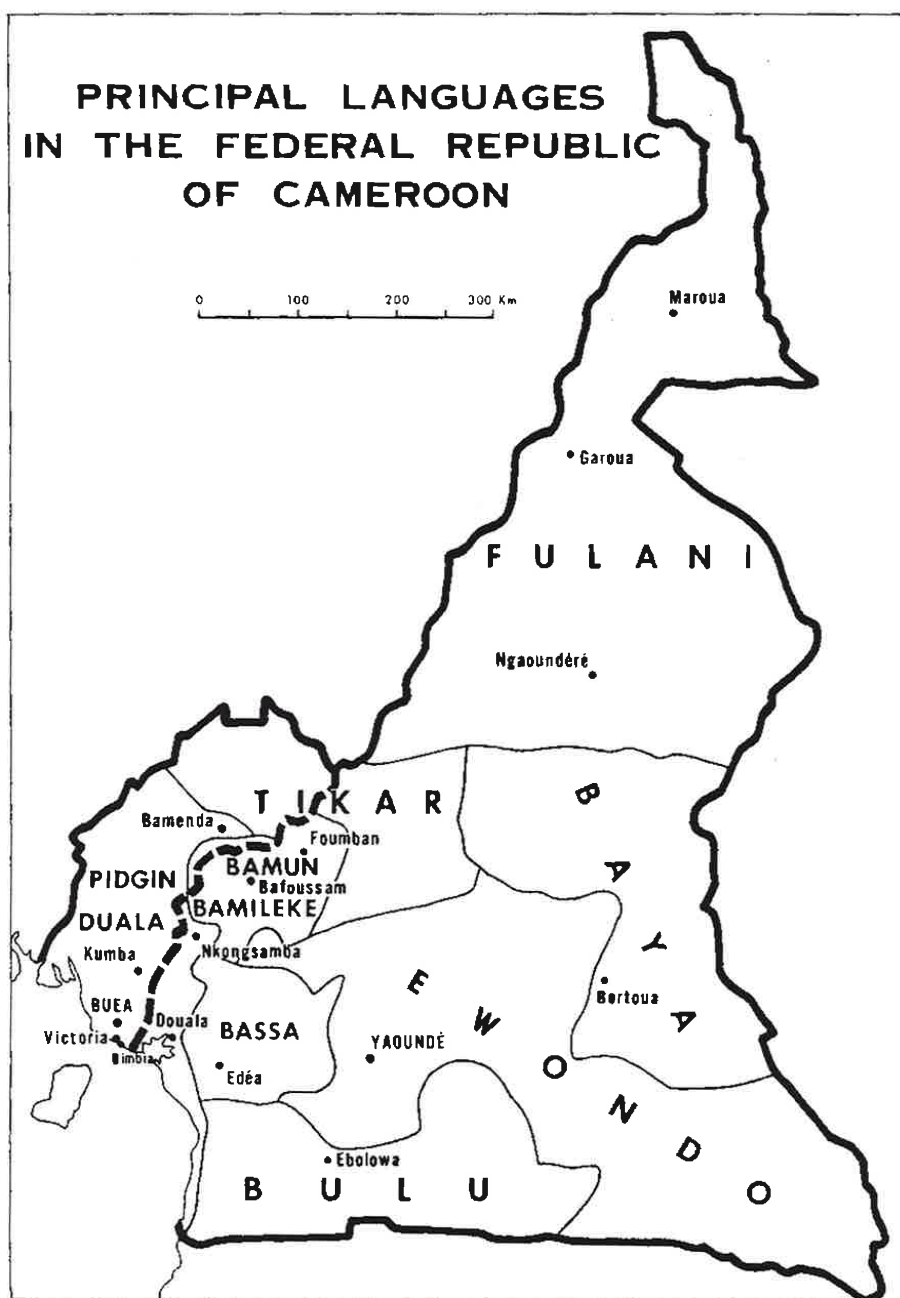


Figure 7. Languages of wider communication and regions of use (based on Fonlon, 1969)

In spite of the numerous speakers of popular lingua francas and other local languages (247), none is used in official instruction; these occupied and still maintain their restricted position, to ethnic settings, for the transmission of cultural heritage. Concern over the unity of the two Cameroons (British and French parts) at Unification in 1961 occupied a central stage rather than serious deliberation of the lan-

guage question in Cameroon. Therefore, French was adopted as the official language in French-speaking Cameroon (70% of the area) while English assumed the same status in the English speaking sector (30% of the area).

To address this language question, the new Federal Republic instituted *official bilingualism* following Professor Fonlon's (Language expert) recommendations. According to Fonlon (1969), the bilingual policy placed Cameroon among other bilingual countries in the world, like Canada and Belgium (at the time). He noted that though these countries adopted the bilingual policy a long time ago, not all Canadians speak English and French, nor all Belgians French and Flemish, but suggested that Cameroon should be different:

Fonlon argued that the vast majority of Canadians and Belgians have remained monolingual. A bilingual state does not necessarily mean bilingual individuals, bilingual citizens. But for us in Cameroon, he argued, it would be singular blindness to advantages staring us in the face, a lamentable lack of idealism, to rest satisfied with having created a bilingual state. The target to aim at, for us, should be, not merely state bilingualism, but *individual bilingualism*: that every child that passes through our education system shall be able to speak or write both English and French. (Fonlon, 1969)

He then outlined the educational system from primary school to secondary school and high school to University. According to Fonlon, English should be taught at the various levels in such a way that after high school studies, the students will be able to follow courses in English and French at the University level. This is the recommendation that has governed the bilingual policy in Cameroon since independence. However, researchers (Anchimbe, 2005; Kouega, 1999; Yeriwah n.d.), argue that the adoption of official language bilingualism gives rise in the course of the years to the main distinguishing markers: Francophone and Anglophone Cameroonians. This distinction as observed has rather attenuated than solved the linguistic deadlock in which many Cameroonians find themselves. This deadlock is also argued to be propagated by the educational system (Ayafor, 2005). Presently, English and French, the official languages that Cameroonians ought to be bilingual in according to (Fonlon, 1969) are still being taught as second languages. This policy has also deprived many Cameroonians of their liberty of expression in schools, courts, offices etc., and is a hindrance to knowledge acquisition and admissions to higher institutions of learning. The fact remains that the policy of official language bilingualism has been more on paper than in practice (Ayafor, 2005).

Other factors,—geographic and demographic, favour the domination of French over English. Cameroon shares its borders with mostly French speaking countries,—Chad to the North, Central African Republic to the East, Congo and Gabon to the South. Nigeria is the only English speaking country, which shares its borders with Cameroon to the West. The demographic distribution of Cameroonians along the lines of the official languages put in place by colonialism gives French more speakers. France annexed 70% of this former German territory after the First World War and Britain only 30%. As a result, French is now spoken by 70% of the population and English by a meagre 30%. In addition, two out of ten administrative regions of Cameroon are English speaking and eight are French

speaking. Because of this unequal distribution in the number of users of these different languages, French became the language of power and leadership while home languages were restricted to ethnic settings for the transmission of the cultural heritage of the respective communities.

English until recently was the less favoured and generally '*marginalized*' of the two official languages (Anchimbe, 2005; Mforteh, 2006). Administrative, political and diplomatic transactions are normally supposed to be both in French and English as stipulated in the constitution but this generally has not been the case. Mforteh (2006) argues that the projection of a bilingual Cameroon means the use of *English* since French already dominates in several national functions. This is further necessitated by the fact that English has sustained its status as a World language / language of technology thus weakening the French monopoly. The ripple effect of this becomes an unprecedented desire by Francophones to learn English. They now see in English rather than in French several opportunities beyond the boundaries of Cameroon. The situation is further precipitated by the burning desire in Cameroonians to migrate abroad, causing many French-speaking families to send their children to English medium schools (Anchimbe, 2005; Mforteh, 2006). Recently, a greater number of French-speaking parents are willing to send their children to English medium secondary schools especially in the North West region of the country or the English system of education in bilingual schools.

Indeed, this indicates how serious they consider the learning of English. Literally speaking, these students have invaded English speaking schools at all levels. This situation calls for pedagogical considerations as it presents challenges for teachers and students. The rush for English and English-based degrees and certificates equally marks some important changes in the educational set-up. In the University of Yaoundé I, Dschang and Ngaoundere where French-English bilingual degree programmes are offered, there are far more Francophones enrolled in these programmes than Anglophones. There is also a high enrolment of Francophones to Buea University, the only English-medium state owned institution. However, at the postgraduate levels, more Francophones are going in for MA degrees in the English departments than Anglophones in the French departments. They also enrol in private institutions of learning. The basic reasons for learning English is the same: living and working abroad (see Mforteh, 2006).

5.1.2 Socio-Political Context

The social and political decision making body is located in the central region of Cameroon. The Centre Region shares its borders with the Central African Republic and a common language, French. This region enjoys a pivotal status because it is also hosts the Capital city of Cameroon- Yaoundé since colonial era; therefore, it constitutes part of the 70% of the territory once under the French rule. As mentioned before, French is very much the language of power and leadership in Cameroon, and it is also logical to think of Yaoundé as the centre of all socio-political decisions. It gained this status in 1960 when Cameroon officially obtained independence from France and declared French as its official language in the domain of education, administration and politics. From Yaoundé, Cameroons' official appel-

lation has undergone transformation three times—1961 when there was unification of the territory under British rule to the independent French state it was called ‘*The Federal Republic of Cameroon*’ In 1972 when these states fused into one it became ‘*The United Republic of Cameroon*’ and once again in 1984 to ‘*Republic of Cameroon*’, with power concentrated in the central figure of a (Francophone) president. The first president (Ahmadou Ahidjo) ruled until 1982 when Cameroons’ current president (Paul Biya) assumed power; both presidents have been French-speaking (Francophone).

Cameroon is ruled following the Western-styled democracy. Yielding to local and international pressure in the 1990’s, the central government introduced a multi-party system with no viable opposition to date. However, the language question plays an important role in political decisions. In order to paint a vivid picture of the unintentional consequences of opting for an integrative policy of bilingualism (which urges Cameroonians to learn the other official language for the sole purpose of living peacefully with other Cameroonians), Kouega (1999) concludes after forty years of this policy:

...Expectedly the language of the day-to day running of the State affairs is unambiguously French: administration is conceived in French and then translated into English. In the Assembly, parliamentarians interact in French and a team of interpreters pass on the message in English to those who do not understand. In politics and finance, all decisions are made public in French and the English community must wait for their official translation, which may be delayed considerably. Treaties and official documents binding the State are written in French even when the countries involved are English speaking. In short, French is the language of work in all sectors of the public service; actually in Cameroon, French monolingualism is gaining grounds at the expense of French/English bilingualism. (P. 42)

In fact, linguistic tensions continue to pervade the society at almost all levels in the Centre region. For instance, a majority of Centre region inhabitants speak French, Pidgin English and recently the created ‘Camfrancanglais’, another pidginised form that blends the same speech act and linguistic elements drawn from French, English, Pidgin and other widespread languages in Cameroon instead of British English (Kouega, 2003). As a result, only those who have had some form of formal schooling at the secondary and high school level speak ‘British English’. Generally, children from the Centre region begin speaking a local language, then French and—if they go to school secondary school—‘British English’. In primary and secondary schools children also begin learning English. This socio-political context influences the educational set up. As stated before, English is no longer considered an identity marker of *les anglos la* or *les anglofou* but a bridge to international success that everyone wants to cross (Anchimbe, 2005). Many former French language schools have hurriedly included a bilingual option even if only for the purpose of teaching English as a second language.

5.2 Status-quo of English Language Teaching in Cameroon

ESL researchers and practitioners in Cameroon are currently challenged by an unprecedented increase in the number of French speaking Cameroonians who clearly express their wish to study the English language. Millions of French speaking Cameroonians like other peoples for whom English is a second language want to improve their command of English or ensure that their children achieve a good command of English. This current social status of English in Cameroon gives English teaching a dominant place in Cameroon school and university curricula. English studies start in primary school as a compulsory subject and continue up till the last year of senior high school. Most students in French-speaking parts of Cameroon study English for three years before they enrol at secondary school.

Those secondary school students who continue in the English sub-system, study English for 7 years in order to pass the General Certificate of Education — Ordinary Level (GCE O/L) and the General Certificate of Education—Advanced Level (GCE A/L). Besides these institutional requirements on English as a school subject, there is also a high demand in English proficiency for employment and professional promotion throughout the country. Interestingly, most students in Cameroon have spent close to 12 years studying English. However, the results show that close to 60% of students do not succeed in the English language at national examinations⁹ (MINEDUC, 2010). Table 8 presents some statistics in recent years.

Table 8. Statistics of Cameroon GCE O Level English Language results 2003–2009

<i>Year</i>	<i>Percentage passed</i>	<i>Percentage failed</i>
2003	41.8	58.17
2004	41.37	58.67
2005	30.90	69.10
2006	31.56	58.44
2007	24.43	75.57
2008	54.35	45.64
2009	37.67	62.31

Those who earn a pass grade in the English Language still have major communication problems in the bilingual school system; researchers (Yeriwa, n.d.; Kouega, 2005) conclude that truly bilingual education is actually implemented only at the university level. Even at this stage, the vast majority of students are ill-prepared by their secondary school education for a bilingual education system. Failure in the G.C.E examinations and communication with people from other non-English speaking regions in Cameroon is a very common phenomenon. This incompetence of students in English has brought home to Cameroon educators, especially ESL

⁹ The test are organised into listening comprehension, reading comprehension, directed writing and essay writing. The tests are demanding and in the 9th grade the students proficiency can be described on the CEFR level as B1 (www.nelb.org.uk).

teacher educators and teachers all over the country, the importance about a serious preparation of future reforms.

The real reason often lies in the problematic status of the English language as simply a medium and object of instruction or learning English for passing examinations, as I have reported from my own experience. Because of the lack of understanding the empowering role of languages, language teacher pedagogy simply underscores the importance of testing and passing examinations. This is further complicated by the weak theoretical and professional emphasis in ESL teacher education (Tambo, 1995) and the failure of the *policy of bilingualism* to promote the learning of English as the second official language of Cameroon. Borg (2006) argues that 'teachers' play a central role in shaping all what goes on in the classroom, in fact teachers' ways of knowing become critical because they reflect the processes of teachers' knowledge and the impact of that learning on their classroom practices and students' opportunities for studying (Johnson, 2006).

Research on teachers' practices, methods and in particular teachers' conceptions of teaching English as foreign/second language to meet the demand of theoretically informed justifications in second/foreign language teaching contexts are current issues in the academic world in general, and also in Cameroon. Since the introduction of the communicative approach to language teaching in the early 1980's, its promotion continues to dominate more traditional approaches like the grammar-translation and audio-lingual approaches. There have been appeals for shifts from teacher-centred to student-centred, from structure-based to task and content-based and even to the post-method in teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In more recent years, there is a consensus among researchers that there is no best method, and thus what becomes more important is the justification of teachers' pedagogical practices as related to theory and context.

Many attempts have been made to clarify teaching practices within the CLT paradigm since the ultimate goal of mastering a language focuses on communication in everyday situations. Many English teachers have considered their voices, experiences and conceptions as important for teaching. Indeed, the studies of teachers' conceptions of teaching and justification of their working methods have much to offer for foreign/second language teaching.

In fact, the current status-quo of ESL teaching in Cameroon compels teachers, teacher educators and policy makers to focus on the guiding principle of ESL teaching as outlined in the curriculum:

Teachers of English have to be abreast with current trends so that the products of the system would not sound outdated with what they do with language....language should be taught in such a way that the learners are provided with study skills and strategies to cope with an ever changing world (MIN-EDUC, 2004)

This is an issue which will re-appear in the empirical study of teachers' justifications of their teaching methods and what they think are possible strategies to facilitate students' transition to this age of inter/transcultural communication (See chapter 8). A focus on teachers' experiences in ESL teaching will also facilitate the

attainment of objectives of bilingualism in the Ministry of Secondary Education which are as follows:

- To develop and improve the functional usage of official languages, English and French
- To promote unity and national integration through quality social dialogue and interaction
- To help make learners become true citizens of the world
- To facilitate the entry of learners in the modern world through the appropriation of information and communication technologies
- To facilitate access to employment and the improvement of career profiles
- To promote a culture of excellence.

It will also give insight not only on into what, how and why teachers do their work in advancing these objectives but also how they feel about the current working context. Recognising and examining their role can be a useful step in facilitating teachers' professional growth.

5.3 English Second Language in this Study

As terminology related to the study of English varies according to the context in different parts of the world, clarification of the use of ESL in this study is needed. English is studied as a second language when it is a country's main language spoken or studied by a population whose native or first language is some other language. I recognise that many students maybe plurilingual or multilingual and that the study of language is taking place within a location where it is spoken. However, I disagree with the idea that the term '*second language*' (Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p.2) '*does not make sense*', instead I argue that it is well-founded and justified in the literature on second language pedagogy. Therefore, no other term, not even 'target language', seems to be an acceptable compromise in this current study.

According to Brown (2007), second language (L2) contexts are those in which the classroom language is readily available out there. This term fits the current study because English is the second official language of Cameroon. The study is not about language acquisition either (acquisition is most often related to second languages—Second Language Acquisition (SLA, is a well-researched theme), because this study is not aimed at investigating how students learn English language, rather it gives insight into teachers' methods, justification of their teaching methods and how they scaffold students study processes in ESL in the Cameroon context. This is called for as teaching and studying belong together.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the educational, linguistic and socio-political context of the present study, which is intended to provide the reader a clearer understanding about Cameroon, its previous and current educational system and the current situation of ESL teaching. It opened with a brief discussion on the pre-colonial and colonial era showing how German, Britain and French colonial rules shaped and continues to

shape educational structures in Cameroon. I then reviewed the linguistic context, the policy of official language bilingualism, focusing in particular on the status of French as the language of power and leadership. However, I noted that English has sustained and strengthened its status as a world language and language of technology weakening the French monopoly in Cameroon. Language shift (French-English medium teaching–studying–learning) has created new demands and expectations for ESL language education. I argue that ESL teacher voices, experiences, conceptions of teaching and justification of their pedagogical practices in relation to theory and context have much to offer for second language teaching and demand that attention be focused on professional development needs associated with bilingualism objectives.

Next, I considered the distinction between ‘second language’ and ‘second language acquisition’ and clarified the use of English second language in the present study.

6 Research Task and Research Questions

The purpose of the current study is to describe, analyse and interpret a) secondary school language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching English as a second language in Cameroon, b) the ideas and images Cameroon language teachers use in their teaching methods, and c) in what ways they justify their teaching methods and how they scaffold or support their students' study processes.

In the theoretical part of the current study, the research literature focusing on this task was addressed from three different perspectives beginning from the theoretical perspective of the science of teaching—studying—learning—Didactics (Chapter 2), then the teachers' Pedagogical thinking in the teaching—studying—learning process (Chapter 3). Finally, there was a focus on the role, status and significance of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as a current and topical teaching practice and a methodological approach among English as second language teachers. This theoretical perspective together with the contextual background of teaching ESL in Cameroon provides the basis for the analysis of the Cameroon teachers' conceptions of teaching English as a second language. In order to accomplish this research task, I formulated three research questions as follows:

1. What are the main language teaching methods of Cameroon teachers of English as a second language?
2. In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language justify the language teaching methods they use?
3. In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language scaffold their students' study processes?

The first central research question concerned the theories and pedagogical elements teachers used in teaching ESL. In examining this question, I will draw primarily on Richard and Rodgers' (2001) well-known model of elements and sub-elements constituting a method. In so doing, I look for the teachers' theory of language teaching which could be functional or skill-based. The analysis will be based on interviews and observation data. I will then look at the pedagogical design of the classroom which includes the role of the teacher, the role of the student and the classroom procedure (interactional pattern) which connect the theory to the actual classroom teaching of ESL. To obtain more insight into the teachers' main teaching method, I will reflect on studies of teachers' teaching methods (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Borg, 2006; Bell, 2007; Harjanne & Tella, 2009) in which the knowledge of methods is equated with a set of options which empowers teachers to respond meaningfully to particular classroom contexts.

In several similar studies, teachers' interest in methods is explored by determining how far methods provide options in dealing with particular teaching contexts. Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004) framework of the elements present in all good teaching leading to an approach also provides a useful tool for developing a conceptual framework for describing teachers' approaches and role in the ESL

teaching. To obtain insight into the constituting elements of methods and language teachers' role and approach in ESL teaching is the main aim in the present study.

In order to answer the second research question related to teachers' justification of their teaching methods, I draw mainly on Fenstermacher and Richardson's (1993) study of teachers' practical arguments in which teachers' reasoning is viewed as a practical argument that includes four kinds of premises (Value, Stipulative, Empirical, Situational). Teachers' pedagogical thinking and teacher's responsibility to deduce, reflect and elaborate when coming to a decision and the consequent justification of these decisions is another special interest in this research. Additionally, Fenstermacher's (1994) argument how teachers' practical reasoning should be subject to epistemological scrutiny is also another useful resource for examining the second question.

Gaining a better understanding of the ways teachers' scaffold or support ESL students' study processes is a third target in this research. To answer this question, I particularly examine themes in the data in the light of the teachers' scaffolding and the prevalence of certain categories in terms of content of the teacher's lesson and whether particular approaches to scaffolding predominate.

7 Research Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodological decisions related to the research approach, research strategy, selection of participants/collection of data, and data analysis—issues central to the implementation of this current study.

7.1 Research Approach

Research approach is often seen (e.g. Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) as comprising a bundle of skills, assumptions and practices that researchers employ as they move from the research paradigm to the empirical world. This indicates that, for every research, there are aspects that inform the choice of an approach, ranging from the knowledge claim assumptions that are brought to a study to the more practical decisions made about how to collect and analyse data. Creswell (2003) points out that through the use of the three elements of inquiry (i.e., knowledge claims, strategies, and methods), a researcher can then identify either the quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approach to inquiry. These considerations provided the rationale for the qualitative research process adopted in this study as researchers approach the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory or ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that they then examine in specific ways (methodology) Denzin and Lincoln (2005).

The research approach in the current study is qualitative and in accordance with assumptions embedded in the constructivist paradigm. Constructivists hold that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences. Accordingly, we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by culture, and individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences. These meanings are varied and multiple leading researchers to look for complexities of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2007). Consequently, when faced with multiple realities embedded within constructivist paradigm, we are reminded by Crotty (1998, cited in Creswell, 2003, p. 9) that:

[h]umans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspective — we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture. Thus, qualitative researchers seek to understand the context or setting of the participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. They also make an interpretation of what they find, an interpretation shaped by the researchers' own experiences and backgrounds.

In this study, the qualitative approach aims to establish the meaning of teaching English as a second language from the views of the participants by participating, through observation of participants' teaching practices, participating in their activities in their natural setting, building a holistic picture and interpreting the detailed views of participants as shaped by my experiences as a student, student teacher in training and teacher of ESL in this context. I act as an ethnographic re-

searcher/observer but basing my observations on the theory presented in the theoretical part of this study.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the didactic relation (teachers' relation to students' studying) cannot be organised universally or following some technical rules which puts the teacher in a position of responsibility in making educational decisions. Therefore, teachers themselves have an active role in describing and justifying educational decisions in the teaching–studying–learning process in accordance with the particular context of practice.

Shank (2002) points out that a basic tenet of qualitative inquiry holds that the researcher matters. This means that researchers are not merely gatherers of information but are an active part of the research process itself. Their actions, their interpretations, and their decisions are often an integral part of the research procedures and the research findings as well. He also notes that qualitative inquiry is often grounded and shaped by issues of culture, society, history, gender etc. 'this grounding invariably starts with the researchers themselves — who they are, what they do, why they do, why they are there, and how they see what they find, qualitative inquirers often put these issues right out front for all of us to see and evaluate' (p. 10).

In my view, Shank (2002, pp. 4–5) aptly defines qualitative research as a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning in stating that:

When you take on the task of doing *an inquiry into meaning*, the rules are different. Meaning, for a qualitative researcher, is always an incomplete picture. It is not so much the case that we do not have the right meaning; it is far more often the case that we do not have enough meaning. Our picture of anything is always too simple. And, rather than applying simplifying moves, we are the sort of empirical inquirers who want instead to develop a more complex picture of the phenomenon or situation. Only we prefer not to call it complex. We prefer terms like *rich, deep, thick, textured, insightful*, and, best of all, *illuminative*.

As a result, a qualitative approach appears suited to the task of capturing teachers' methods, their pedagogical thinking and justifications of these methods and different ways of scaffolding the study process of ESL students, while at the same time enabling me to more thoroughly access the voices of the participants and uncover some of the diversity of beliefs and experiences represented amongst them.

According to Creswell (2003), a qualitative approach has the following characteristics: (i) takes place in a natural setting, (ii) uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, (iii) is emergent rather than tightly prefigured, (iv) is fundamentally interpretive, (v) views social phenomena holistically, (vi) systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study, (vii) uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted, iterative, and simultaneous, (ix) adopts and uses one or more strategies of inquiries as a guide for the procedures in the qualitative study (pp. 181–182).

The above description of qualitative research make this approach, I believe, very appropriate to use in my research task.

7.2 Research Strategy

From different characteristics associated with qualitative research approach, (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Creswell, 2007), I relied on ethnographic strategy of inquiry in the design of the current study. This strategy was considered in defining the research plan which determined the purpose of the study, the research task, questions, the strategy and data collection techniques and discussion in the literature on ESL. Based on the knowledge claim of the present study (i.e., knowledge about ESL teachers' methods, justification of methods and scaffolding can be studied from their views) embedded in the constructivist paradigm, I considered the ethnographic strategy of inquiry most suitable to obtain an insider view in ESL teaching–studying–learning in Cameroon.

LeCompte and Preissle (1998, p. 2) define ethnography as an investigative process which social scientists employ in different ways to study human behaviour, depending upon their discipline. Originating in anthropological and sociological research, the term ethnography, according to Creswell (2008, pp. 472–473), literally means writing about groups of people and a qualitative research procedure for describing, analysing and interpreting a culture-sharing group's shared pattern of behaviour, beliefs, and language that develops over time. The purpose of ethnography is to come to a deeper understanding of how individuals view and participate in their own social and cultural worlds (Harklau, 2005). In this type of research design, the research problem is studied from within, which is connected to the strand of philosophical thought suggesting that human beings and the social world are fundamentally different in nature and behaviour because of their capacities for language and meaning making. Given this position, the social world cannot be reduced to what can be observed but rather is created, perceived, and interpreted by people themselves (Harklau, 2005). Therefore, to gain knowledge of the social world, one must gain insight into the account of participants' experiences.

According to LeCompte and Preissle (1998), in studying the way of human life, the ethnographic strategies have particular characteristics which are used to some extent by social science disciplines when mandated by research goals:

First, the strategies used elicit phenomenological data; they represent the world view of the participants being investigated, and participant constructs are used to structure the research. Second, the ethnographic research strategies are empirical and naturalistic. Participant and nonparticipant observation are used to acquire first hand, sensory accounts of phenomena as they occur in real world settings, and investigators take care to avoid purposive manipulation of variables in the study. Third, ethnographic research is holistic. Ethnographers seek to construct descriptions of total phenomena within their various contexts and to generate from these descriptions the complex interrelationships of causes and consequences that affect human behaviour toward and belief about phenomena. Finally, ethnography is multimodal or eclectic; ethno-

graphic researchers use a variety of research techniques to amass their data (p.3).

Taken together, ethnographic research is an option when the study of a group provides understanding of a larger issue; it involves more than just a simple representation of phenomena, it involves obtaining a holistic picture of phenomena within the culture sharing group examined.

In the past 15–25 years, ethnographic research has become a recognised tradition in research on L2 teaching and learning representing a wide diversity of perspectives and findings. Harklau (2011, p.184) claims that a growing use of ethnography in educational circles was promoted by scholars taking a Vygotskian and Bakhtinian sociocultural perspectives who sought to document how learning and development are situated in sociocultural contexts. She also points out that the use of classroom based ethnographic studies in L2 in recent years have focused on topics such as teacher perspectives on lesson plan adjustments and lectures, student perspectives on lecture comprehension, dialog journals, student accommodation and resistance to learning English in a post-colonial context, microanalyses of ESL and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom interactions. Thus an ethnographic approach gives good starting points for research to be carried out in school as it aims at describing holistically the experiences or day-to-day picture, or ‘way of life’ of a particular culture sharing group. Interestingly, Harklau (2011) notes that of more than 230 research publications examined for over the past six years ‘Research from other Asian countries, the Middle East, *Africa*, and South America remains rare, with only 10 studies identified’ (p.176).

This examination points to the relative scarcity of research data on L2 teaching from the African context both locally and globally. It is particularly important to look at secondary contexts because it is in secondary schools where students arguably undertake more complex intellectual tasks and, therefore, require more scaffolding from their teachers (Peddar 2006, cited in Harfitt, 2012, p.132). This also attests to the relevance and need for more studies like the present one. Teachers’ conceptions and methods of teaching ESL, the justification of these methods and various ways in which they scaffold students’ study processes are primarily an experiential form of knowledge that teachers have developed through their professional experiences in relation to the pedagogical demands in a particular context (Cameroon); thus one of the beneficial ways to examine its different aspects, would be to spend a considerable amount of time ‘in the field’ interviewing, observing, and gathering documents about this group in order to deepen understanding of teachers’ perspectives on the teaching–studying–learning process of ESL in Cameroon.

As shown in Figure 1, congruence between the conceptual framework, the research strategy and methodology is important in any study. Moreover, the choice of the qualitative research approach involves careful consideration as it needs to be clearly guided by the aim of the study, the knowledge claims, all built into the design of the study. This is not to say that the methodological design was ‘fixed in stone’; however, it involved ‘bringing to consciousness — and to the notebook — as many aspects as possible of the research’s planning and preparation for inquiry’,

as observed by LeCompte and Preissle (1993). In developing and designing my study, I was also cognisant of the guidance provided by Boeije (2010), who points out that ‘a plan provides structure, but it should not interfere with flexibility. A plan provides certainty, but should not block other promising options’ (p.2).

7.3 Data Gathering Methods

After deciding the design of this present study, the next phase involved identifying the ‘culture-sharing group’ and since the study focuses on language teachers’ conceptions of teaching ESL in Cameroon secondary schools, various methods, practices, and strategies of collecting data/information about the participants were considered, keeping ethnographic principles in mind. It was therefore logical to gather information by visiting the sites where the group lives and works during the ‘field-work’ period. Data gathering options were also considered, and data gathering methods to be used included participant observation, informal discussions with the participating teachers, field notes, individual/ focused group interviews and ESL policy documents.

In classroom-based ethnographic studies, the researcher can use multiple data gathering methods, e.g. participant observation, fieldnotes, individual and focus group interviewing; she then gathers data which are studied. What is typical about such ethnographic data is the comparison of these multiple data sources, commonly referred to as ‘triangulation’, to ensure accuracy and to facilitate interpretation (Creswell, 2007; Hinkel, 2011). In Creswell’s (2007) view, ‘ethnography is appropriate if the needs are to describe how a cultural group works and to explore the beliefs, language, behaviours,...the literature may be deficient in actually knowing how the group works because the group is not in the mainstream, people may not be familiar with the group, or its ways are so different that readers may not identify with the group’ (p.70). The ethnographic design is relevant for the present study as it opens up the second language teaching methods, justifications and scaffolding of students’ study processes by Cameroon ESL teachers — a group many readers may not identify with. The schools and the teachers are described in detail in Section 7.4 and in Table 4.

7.3.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation in the current study has two purposes; on the one hand, the aim was to produce emic data or information supplied by the teachers at their place of work, and on the other hand the aim was to come to know the participants’ social world as they know it themselves. Le Compte and Preissle (1993) remind us that fieldworkers customarily participate in the lives, experiences, and communities of those they study as they interact as fellow humans with the people under investigation. Harklau (2005) further clarifies that, traditionally, participant observation has meant residing or spending considerable lengths of time interacting with people in every day naturalistic settings, observing and recording their activities in extensive fieldnotes, and interviewing and conversing with them to learn their perspectives, attitudes, beliefs and values. Indeed, depending on the study, the researcher can adopt several different roles during observation and according to how aware

participants are that they are being studied. The researcher can choose to be the complete participant, the participant-as-observer, the observer-as-participant, and the complete observer (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

The complete participant assumes an insider role in the group being studied and whose research identity is not known to the group. This requires deception; the hidden complete participant works under cover and this raises ethical issues. The participant-as-observer enters into the social life of those studied, sometimes assuming an insider role, but often playing the part of a snoop, shadow or historian—roles not normally found in the group but familiar enough to the participants to allow comfortable interactions. The participant-as-observer is known to be a researcher, can address ethical issues more directly, can request access to the whole group, to negotiate data collecting and recording and to seek feedback on what is seen and how it is interpreted (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

However, these positions characterise a researcher's stance toward the people studied. Also the range of participation could vary throughout the field work period. Even so, the balance between observing and participating varies according to what is happening, and people's awareness of being studied comes and goes. Furthermore, when field residence extends over a long time, people forget that the field worker is studying them and begin to treat the researcher as a complete participant (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 94). From my point of view, ethics remains an important consideration for social scientists, as Boeije (2010) notes:

Theoretically any means can be used to gain the knowledge to answer our research questions, such as eavesdropping at private conversations, undercover participation, photographing intimate scenes, tapping telephones and reading personal letters and diaries. But it does not work that way. Social scientists follow ethical rules of behaviour to prevent them from doing harm to others and to protect themselves. The report of findings based on data that are unethically gathered can lead to harm, enormous dilemmas and possible conflicts...ethics are concerned with finding a balance between benefits and risks for harm.

I was cognisant of ethical dilemmas and principles (informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, etc.), through the stages of the present study.

My role as observer differed according to the situation. I functioned as a non-participant observer when the teachers were conducting their lessons. I wrote field notes while sitting in the corner of each classroom (see section 7.3.2). However, I was a participating observer when some students asked for help by looking at me, asking me questions and raising their hands while the teachers were busy helping other students. During the fieldwork period, I tried to visit the schools as frequently as possible as agreed in the teachers' schedule. This was necessary because all five teachers were subject teachers with different teaching schedules and days to be present in their schools, so it was easier to work according to the participants' teaching schedules. Besides, I did not want to be viewed as someone who evaluates events on campus for critique. Therefore, observations were held at times that the teacher proposed.

Gaining access to these schools was easy. I was initially introduced to the teachers by a colleague in a written statement (by me) as a doctoral student from the University of Helsinki who is researching teachers' teaching practices in ESL. I was also introduced to the vice principals as a researcher from the University of Helsinki upon arrival at the schools. I explained the purpose of the research to the vice principals and teachers again and assured confidentiality. Since my entry was easy, I was conscious about not disrupting any school schedules or drawing unnecessary attention to myself, because in my experience as a teacher, schools tend to resent people or activities that interfere with school routines. At the end of my observations, I thanked the teachers and vice principals and did not return to campus.

Based on this mutual agreement, I started my observations from February–2010 and they lasted until June 2010. The observations concentrated at the beginning of the studies on School A because there were many more teachers and teaching lessons in ESL. However, I also visited School B and C almost every week throughout the observation period (section 7.4.). The first five visits to the three schools were devoted to becoming acquainted with the school context and the culture of the classroom. The observations were spread out over the spring semester of 2010 so that I could observe as much detail as possible in the teachers' teaching methods and pedagogical decisions as they occurred naturally in the classroom setting.

The priority was to accumulate significant details of classroom practice and scaffolding strategies or the methods teachers resorted to while teaching during the 50mins to 1 hour ESL lessons each week. The purpose was to reflect these back during interviews as a stimulus for teacher's commentary and elucidation. I recorded all conversations between teachers and students in my notebook. The observations naturally preceded the interviews in order that I could get an insight into teachers' methods and eventually use this information to get their justifications, and to establish the type and amount of scaffolding carried out in the ESL lesson. This present study, therefore, strongly relied upon how teachers described what they did in particular lessons (Table 9) and upon the ways in which they explained their pedagogical actions, rather than relying solely on the researchers' observations and interpretations.

Table 9. Number of observations per school and teacher

Number of Teachers	Number of observations	Schools
Teacher 1	15	B
Teacher 2	20	A
Teacher 3	18	A
Teacher 4	18	A
Teacher 5	15	C

Table 9 illustrates the number of observations per schools and the teachers.

7.3.2 Field Notes

I took field notes during lessons and after the lessons completed them in my room. These constitute the field notes for the current study. LeCompte and Presslie (1993) point out that material recorded includes what investigators observe themselves which creates a data bank of field notes. Most of the field notes taken during observation of lessons were written descriptions of teachers and students' activities and conversations as they occurred during ESL lessons with my own personal questions and reflections. I started by taking quick notes sometimes accompanied with verbatim accounts or some incomplete thoughts and symbols intended to help me recall what exactly happened.

After the lesson and informal discussions with the teachers usually in the staff room, I wrote down my reflections again in my notebook. I did not transcribe my fieldnotes. I felt I was able to deal with the notes by just resorting to my notebook. Moreover, they were written in the language of my every day conversation — English. However, I audiotaped interviews, transcribed them and later on cross-checked with the field notes I took on a daily basis.

7.3.3 Semi-Structured and Focus group Interviews

The semi-structured interviews that I conducted one-on-one with the teachers were directly focused on my research questions. I had prepared the content and questions before I started the interviews. In my planning I took care to include open-ended and in-depth questions to allow options for responding. While I had advance knowledge of questions to ask, I was also prepared to follow any unexpected and informative lines of reasoning that came up in teachers' conversations, which I report later in the results section of the current study. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

A 'problem tree' (Ferreira, 1997) exercise I used in focused group interviews is a popular education technique following the principles of education methodology involving three steps—a) **To See** the situation lived by the participants, **To Judge** (or to analyse) this situation at its root causes, including its particular socio-economic, political, cultural aspects and **To Act** to change this situation by planning short term actions and long term actions. In this exercise, a group begins with the identification of the problem, proceeds to map the leaves or everyday symptoms of the problem, next it maps the trunk or the attitudes and beliefs that support the problem and the roots or the ideologies and structures that anchor the unseen problem. Thus teachers could trace and analyse the root of their problems through their own experiences in teaching ESL, and work to change their situation by planning short-term and long-term actions. The interview was audiotaped and transcribed for analysis. 'Problem trees/maps' (see Appendix 1) were also generated by six ESL teachers from different schools with varying teaching experiences — the most experienced had taught for fourteen years and the least experienced for three

months¹⁰. I later on interviewed the pedagogic inspector after I had completed the observations and interviews with the teachers.

7.3.4 Policy Documents

The key policy documents I analysed in this study were published at the Cameroon Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education's pedagogic inspectorate in charge of the promotion of *Bilingualism* provided me with the ministerial circular defining the objectives and organisation of bilingualism at secondary schools in Cameroon. This national day of bilingualism first introduced in 2002 defines the teaching–learning of the two official languages — English and French (Ministerial Decision No 1141/b1/1464 of 28/10/2002 MINEDUC). The pedagogic inspectorate in charge of ESL teaching also provided a scheme of work for secondary school English teaching, and the syllabus for ESL teaching (Order No 1757/D/55 16/3/2004 MINEDUC/SG/IGPBIL).

This syllabus gives general information on the methods and how much content teachers should discuss in the ESL lesson, while the scheme of work sub-divides the syllabus into weekly teaching objectives. The division of hours per school subject is decided by the Cameroon Ministry of Education. There are normally supposed to be 5 periods for English language teaching for every school and according to the scheme 'All things being equal, the teacher should teach three to four lessons per week'.¹¹ Additionally, a document explaining the professional development objectives of the Cameroon English Language and Literature Teachers Association (CAMELTA) clarified activities and projects in ESL teaching–learning. Also, the course descriptions for the Higher Teacher Training College in the department of English in Yaoundé give information on the content and focus of pre-service teachers in ESL.

These policy documents give insight into the language teaching situation based on these guidelines from the Ministry of Education in Cameroon. From the syllabus, there is a detailed scheme of work which describes its mission in this way:

Because of the fact that students generally move from one class to the other with shaky, incomplete mastery of the rudimentary elements of language in the previous level, it becomes sine qua non that their production should be deficient. These schemes of work have been conceived to solve this perennial problem, to ease the work of the teacher and so make it a pleasurable roller coaster ride. It should give the teacher a coherent work with suggested lesson

¹⁰ Though she had taught full time only for three months at the time of this focus group, she was already involved in an ESL exchange programme with the USA and shared her experiences with professional teachers. She has been working in the ESL field for more than 7 years plus she completed the training college and completed some research in ESL teaching as well.

¹¹ In some schools in the current study there are 4 lessons and two teachers can teach the 4 lessons—which is supposed to be taught by one teacher. This is, however, the case because in urban government schools there happens to be more teachers for English language in one school while there are fewer or none as we move out of the urban areas—a highly problematic concern. While at some private schools where Teacher 1 taught for instance there are only two hours for English teaching per week.

contents drawn from the prescribed textbooks and the National English Language syllabus...we wish to assert that we selected bounteously from many of them, which makes the present schemes a 'consensual' document of sorts. And we should prescribe eclecticism for the teacher who wants to be in order. Tradition had shown that others who examine, re-examine, shape and re-shape what they have to teach in the function of other 'extant' related materials always teach with gusto and éclat. The plan of work is arranged in a tabular form according to the following structure or format: weeks/sequence, lesson content, lesson objectives, language skills, suggested activities and specific objectives.

I found this introductory text a bit strange, loaded with 'fancy' expressions and promises 'solutions' to the language teaching situation. It prescribes eclecticism as a method for 'the teacher who wants to be in order' the meaning or definition of eclecticism is vague and open to many interpretations. However, this detailed scheme was not available to the teachers in this study. I got it easily from the Ministry of Education and I had several discussions with the teachers why they did not use this particular scheme of work and there arose some very '*interesting*'¹² discussions. The law on orientation on education was not available to the teachers neither do they have the bilingualism document. I also heard of a document named 'The New Pedagogic Approach' but I had no access to that document. From my observation the teachers really focused on the use of their textbooks and these documents were just somewhere 'there'. Most teachers and even those in this study are members (registered, not necessarily active, though) of the Cameroon English Language and Literature Teachers Association (CAMELTA), which is involved in professional development programmes and projects for teachers, therefore I could get information from the activities and projects teachers are involved in.

7.4 Research Participants

The data for this study came from language teachers in Cameroon who teach ESL at secondary level with some years of teaching experience. According to the knowledge claim assumptions of the current study, teachers' methods and pedagogical thinking in the teaching–studying–learning process develop through experience and reflection on their professional experiences and this insight into their thinking can be studied from their views. I decided to select participants engaged in full time teaching of English as a second language at the secondary level for at least six

¹² The five teachers told me they knew such a scheme exists but they had been told to pick it up from the Ministry of Education and some have been there but could not find the document. I asked the pedagogic inspector and he informed me they were preparing a new scheme of work. However, the teachers have the GCE Ordinary Level examination scheme of work. One teacher was very annoyed why these schemes were not available and why the pedagogic inspectors will come to evaluate their teaching when they have no schemes of work. Another informed that the inspectors asked them to prepare a scheme and she is not ready to do it because she can use her textbook to teach 'I know that I have 20 units to cover for form 3, first term I make sure I teach 10 units, second term 7 and 3 the third term. That is the importance of the scheme of work, just to know that your syllabus has been shared.'

years because they could reflect on their accumulated ‘wisdom of practice’ (Shulman, 1987).

Regarding the sampling technique for selecting participants, I considered various options available. Cohen et al. (2007) note that researchers should consider the sample size in relation to a teachers’ time, access to teachers, teaching schedules and feasibility of conducting research within a live setting. They also emphasise that researchers must make sampling decisions early in the general planning of the research study. I used ‘purposive sampling’ (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) largely because I already had a purpose in mind, i.e. I was working with a pre-defined group—teachers of English as a second language in urban areas. However, in order to find these teachers, I provided a summary of my research to one teacher of English as a second language whom I knew and she suggested other participants who then volunteered to participate in the study. They all worked in different schools and were suitable for my study because the aim was not to compare schools but to study teachers’ pedagogical thinking.

What is important to note here is that I originally intended to use rural schools as the basis of my study, but found that there were difficulties accessing these schools due to bad roads and the extra cost I could not afford. I accordingly decided to focus on a sample comprising ESL teachers in urban areas. Since participant observation amongst other data gathering methods was regarded essential in the current study, the schools had to be chosen at a sufficiently close range to each other and easily accessible so that the distance would not constitute a hindrance in the process of data collection. The field work period finally included three secondary schools in Yaoundé the capital city of Cameroon (later called schools A, B, C), five teachers (later called Teachers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) and six classes at the junior secondary level, 3 classes in school A, 2 in school B and 1 in school C. I visited the pedagogic office for English language teaching at the Ministry of Education and discussed my research with some inspectors and one volunteered to be part of this study. As mentioned before, I later on interviewed the pedagogic inspector after completing the interviews and lesson observations with the teachers.

School A—Teachers 2, 3 and 4

School A was a government bilingual secondary and high school located in the heart of the capital city of Yaoundé. The school had approximately 1,000 students divided into two sections—one section for those pursuing education in the French sub-system and the other for English sub-system as was explained in section 5.1. This large number of students also meant very strict control on campus to ensure all students are found in their classroom during lectures, not loitering around. As soon as one stepped into the campus the bilingual focus was evident on this ‘bill board’ ‘Let us keep AIDS away from school/ Mettons le SIDA hors de l’ école’. The school is one of the state schools in the capital city which usually receives inspectors for ESL teaching from the Ministry of Education. Some of its ESL teachers were actively participating in state run professional development programs under the Cameroon English Language Teachers’ Association (CAMELTA). At the time of my field work period there were about 8 ESL teachers, and a head of

the ESL department teaching English and Literature to students from Form 1 to Form 5 and Literature to Lower and Upper-sixth students.

Teacher 2 is a female teacher in English in her 40's who has taught for 22 years. After graduating from the first cycle of the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS), with a teaching diploma for English language and Literature at the secondary school (DIPES I), she taught for seven years after which she completed the last two years in in-service teacher training in the above institution (DIPES II). She has also taught ESL in different regions in Cameroon, while continuing studies in women and gender studies. She focuses more on research and publishing in the field of women and gender studies. Let her explain in her own words:

I don't really feel motivated doing research in teaching because you sit and you know you teach children, you are there, they come back, they are appointed your bosses and they begin to talk to you anyhow, then with tribalism where only sons and daughters are appointed in their land, then when you don't have the opportunity of working in your own home town, you see your own future bleak, you try too to do something *you can be more fulfilled*.

Accordingly, she has been able to travel and attend conferences out of the country, to write and get published, which is difficult to accomplish just in education — she claims. At the time of this research, she suggested I observe her teaching ESL to Form four students, a class of approximately 80 students.

Teacher 3, a female ESL teacher in her 40's, had also taught for 22 years. She had completed her studies at the first and second cycles of the Advanced Teachers' Training College (ENS). During this research, Teacher 3 has already taught for thirteen years in this particular school. She has eagerly contributed to discussions about ESL teaching department meetings. She was also actively engaged in professional development seminars and workshops for the association of English language teachers in Cameroon. At the time of this research, she taught Form Five class of approximately 80 students. Teacher 3 was very passionate about teaching and believed that her teaching skill was an 'innate quality' she discovered while completing her university studies. She even relates a dream with her father telling her 'do you recall what I told you when you were young? You have a skill in you, which you need to use that skill in order to educate others, and my father asked me in that dream that I should go in for a competitive exam to become a teacher'. Thanks to this vision about her father she really loves teaching '*it was like a call, I had an innate quality for it*'.

Teacher 4 is also another female ESL teacher in her late 30's. After completing her studies at the ENS teacher training college, she has worked for 13 years. Teacher 4 participates actively in several pedagogical seminars, and she was especially enthusiastic about designing English language teaching materials for students at the secondary school level, thus she has also written and published some text-based materials for ESL students at the secondary level. At the time of this research, she taught ESL to Form 4 and 5 students in classes of approximately 80 students. Teacher 4 has 'always loved teaching' and when she came to the univer-

sity *'that was the only profession I thought I'd like to do because of time. I know that they have a lot of time and I just thought that I'd be good as a teacher'*.

School B—Teacher 1

School B was a private secondary and high school surrounded by other private schools with approximately 500 students. The school mainly provided education for students in the English sub-system. The school employed qualified ESL teachers, most of whom also taught in state owned schools, the reason being that private education is expensive, and most need to compete with other schools by providing quality education and guarantee the success of students in local and national examinations. ESL teachers in school B frequently participated in pedagogic seminars and exchanged such ideas freely in teacher's room. From such staff room discussions, it was evident that ESL teachers in school B followed closely students' progress in teaching–studying–learning process.

During the research, Teacher 1, a female in her early 40's, had taught ESL for 22 years. She graduated from the University of Yaoundé I with a bachelor's degree in English language and Literature. She had also trained for two years in ENS Yaoundé. She was actively engaged in pedagogic seminars related to the conduct of national examinations in ESL and had marked the General Certificate of Education examination in English Language for the last 20 years. At the moment of data gathering, Teacher 1 taught Form Four and Form Five which she has become very familiar with over the last six years. Teacher 1 was also an ESL teacher in government secondary school in the capital city where she taught full-time. Since private education is usually more costly and hardly an option for most low income-earning families, Teacher 1's form four and five were not so crowded. The classrooms were made up of approximately 50 students per class. Teacher 1 loved to listen to people who speak **good** (her emphasis) English. This was also a goal for her ESL teaching.

School C—Teacher 5

School C was situated in the metropolitan area. It was also a private secondary school as well, it is neither small, nor especially big one; it has approximately 400 students. School C also depends on qualified teachers from government schools around Yaoundé.

Teacher 5 a female teacher in her late 30's has worked as ESL teacher for 17 years. After completing her studies at the University of Yaoundé I, she took up teaching in private schools, and later enrolled in the Teachers' training college for two years. I completed the last two years of my own training with Teacher 5. I know Teacher 5 was actively engaged in pedagogic seminars in the English language Teachers' Association. She co-authors supplementary materials for local and national examinations and took up part time teaching in private schools while in training. Even though I knew Teacher 5, I had never observed her teaching in the classroom until the field work period of the current research. Teacher 5 also teaches in School A above and suggested I observe her Form 5 class in this private

secondary school because she taught mostly English Literature to Form 4 students in School A. Her form five class was made up of approximately 30 students.

Teacher 5 encourages every language teacher to meet their objectives; apparently she loves teaching ‘I have become so involved in it, *I just feel terrible if I even stay at home without going to school*’. She also maintains that every ‘good’ language teacher must be a researcher. Table 10 gives basic information about the participants in the current study which is intended to help readers understand their general background as well.

Table 10. The background of teachers and pedagogic inspector who participated in the current study in 2010

participants	Teaching experience	Form	Gender	Education
Teacher 1	22 years	4 and 5	Female	BA. (LMA) ¹³ DIPES II
Teacher 2	22 years	4	Female	DIPES I, DIPES II. MA. (Women and Gender studies)
Teacher 3	22 years	5 and 2	Female	BA. (LMA) DIPES II
Teacher 4	13 years	4 and 3	Female	BA. (LMA) DIPES II
Teacher 5	17 years	5 and 1	Female	BA. (LMA) DIPES II
Pedagogic Inspector for ESL	9 years (as P.I)		Male	DIPES II

As mentioned before, all the five teachers had been trained in the Higher Teacher Training College part of the University of Yaoundé I for 3years for the first cycle (DIPES I) and qualified to teach English language and Literature to *secondary school* students and additional 2years in the second cycle (DIPES II) to teach English language and Literature to *secondary and high school students*.

7.5 Data Analysis Methods

During and especially after the fieldwork period, I reviewed my original research task and the research questions in order to be able to find relevant answers to them. In doing this, I was cognisant of guidance and direction provided by other researchers including LeCompte and Presslie (1993), Boeije (2010), all of whom point out the importance of this component to a research study. For example, many research projects wander from the original question, but the original questions as well as subsequent iterations must not be lost entirely ‘they shaped the initial inquiry and must be addressed, either to lay them aside with good reasons made explicit in the final report or to indicate in detail how they changed and were necessarily modified’. Similarly, a review of the original research task also reacquaints the

¹³ Lettre Moderne Anglaises/ Modern English Letters and DIPES II- Diplôme de professeur de l’enseignement secondaire/Secondary and High School Teacher’s Diploma. DIPES I- Secondary school Teacher’s Diploma

researcher with the varied audiences for whom the study originally was intended and permits their needs and interests to be addressed as analysis proceeds (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). This process which LeCompte and Presslie (1993) citing Romagnano (1991) is best described as '*tidying up*'. In the present study this phase was completed in two months (October–November 2010) after the fieldwork period.

After '*tidying up*', I continued by familiarising myself with the data. Data familiarisation should furnish the researcher with a broad picture of the data collected before formal analysis begins. To help fulfil this objective, one of the strategies I used to gain an overview of the material was to listen to the interviews, transcribe and read the transcripts in their entirety several times together with fieldnotes to get a sense of them as a whole before breaking them into parts. Thus familiarisation involved immersion in the data, listening to tapes, reading transcripts and noting recurrent ideas, themes and patterns. Next, I organised the data to facilitate an intensive analysis. In order to make the data manageable and by using Atlas.ti program (www.atlasti.com), I accumulated the interview transcripts into a single comprehensive file. This program helped me gain a more inclusive picture of the data accumulated and to manage the data for further steps and actions. For the purpose of reducing the data to its gist, I used coding as my data analysis strategy; following Boeije (2010) who emphasises that 'everyone has to start with reading the data then separating the data into meaningful parts'.

Coding is a systematic way of understanding and keeping track of research data that allowed me to focus and track specific information, leaving aside what may not be relevant to be dealt with later or discarded. I should also point out that when I began my data analysis with initial coding in this Atlas.ti program, I did not have any specific analysis model to use, but after deepening my understanding of different possibilities following theoretical models, I incorporated the model for analysing the first two research questions based on Richard and Rodgers' (2001) model of methods analysis and Fenstermacher and Richardson's (1993) study on teachers' justification of methods. Therefore, when creating the codes, I resorted to the three chosen research areas and the research questions related to them. Thus the coding at this phase was abductive in that a list of ideas and meanings based on these models was provided for further analysis. The coding process calls for reading of the materials over and over again and conducting an analysis each time (Figure 8).

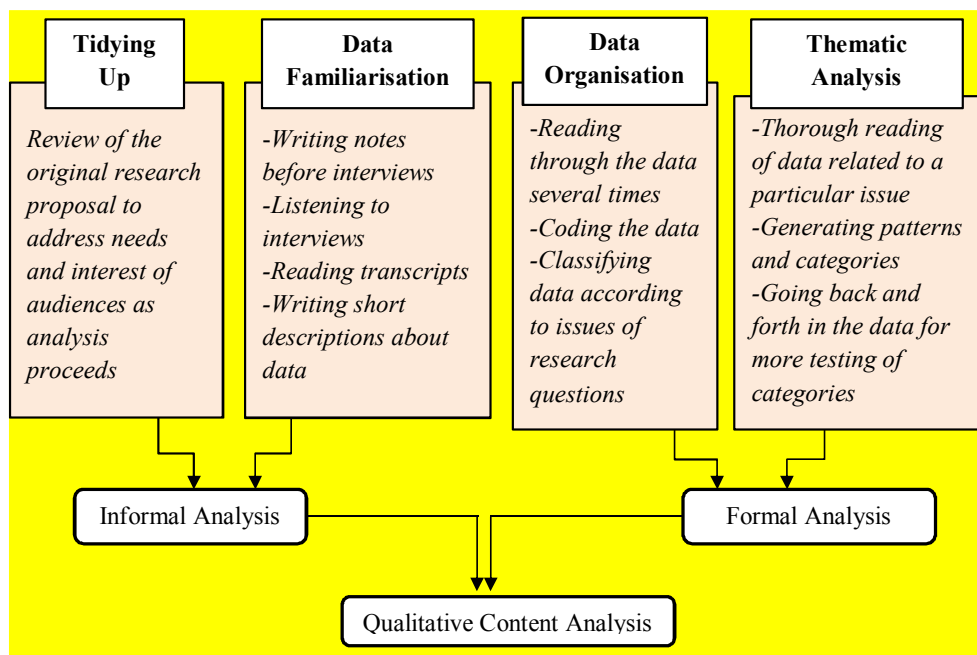


Figure 8. The process of Qualitative Data Analysis used in this study.

In this process, I largely employed qualitative content analysis Bryman (2001, p. 381).

7.5.1 Analysing the Main Language Teaching Methods

As mentioned before, I used coding as my data analysis strategy and analysing teachers' main teaching methods in ESL and the approach was abductive in that a list of ideas and meanings based on the Richards and Rodgers' (2001) model was used to develop codes. My codes included directly different elements of teacher's methods in the model such as 'theory of language', 'pedagogical design' and 'classroom techniques', but I also adopted new codes if they seemed to emerge from the data. In particular, I attempted to search for more inclusive domains to explain teachers' pedagogical approaches in relation to the ESL students' participation in the classroom. Teacher-led teaching contrasted with student-centred teaching and offered a lens through which I could analyse the teachers' approaches in line with Communicative Language Teaching.

The observation data of teachers' and students' activities in the classroom were constantly analysed by comparing with the interview data. When the interview data supported my observation data, I added them to the categories of my study.

I analysed the students' participation as active or passive based on the interactional patterns observed in the classrooms for example when students were silent and listening to the teacher or interacting and communicating with the teacher and their peers in the classroom. Figure 9 illustrates how an inclusive domain in

teacher's pedagogical approach was analysed based on Richards and Rodgers' model.

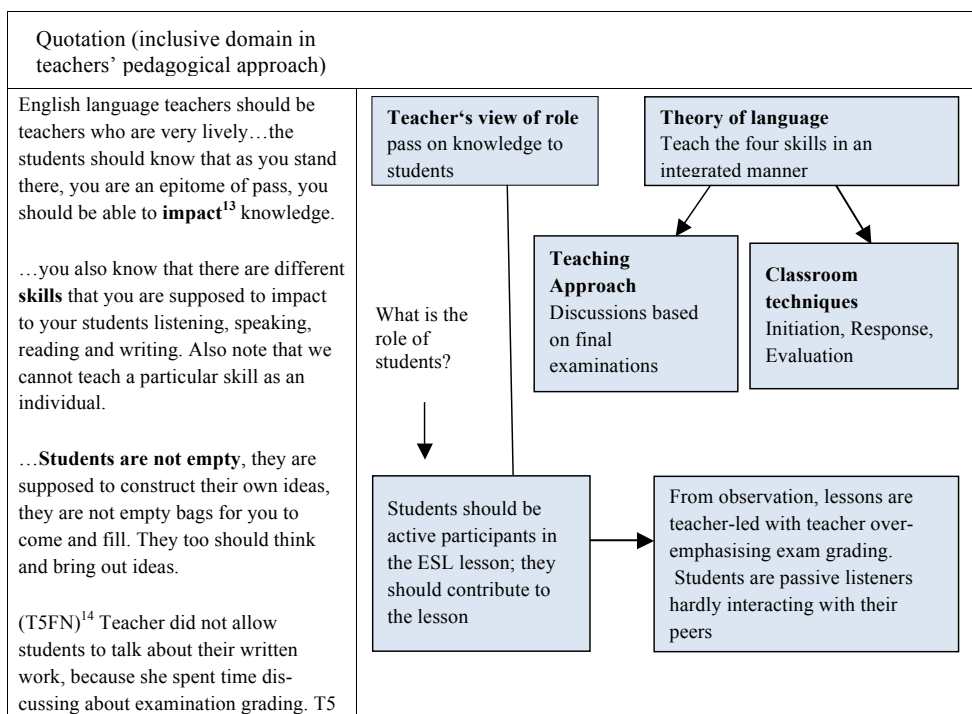


Figure 9. The model of data analysis for teaching

The analysis of teachers' main teaching methods was completed through content analysis based on the observations and interviews. The analysis showed that teachers' theories differed from actual classroom language teaching. The decision about the predominant approach was based on the analysis (see section 8.1.4). In the next section, I will analyse the teachers' justification of their pedagogical actions/decisions in ESL teaching.

7.5.2 Analysing Teachers' Justifications of their Main Language Teaching Methods

Teachers' justifications of their main language teaching methods were studied through the practical reasoning perspective (see Fenstermacher & Richardson's 1993). The analysis was content-based. According to Fenstermacher and Richardson, teachers' practical reasoning is a process of thinking, it describes the more general and inclusive activities of thinking, forming intentions and actions and includes a series of reasons (i.e. premises) that are connected to a concluding judgement or action (p. 103). They can be fully described by four kinds of premises; value, stipulative, empirical and situational premises.

In the interview data, the unit of analysis was carried out in accordance with the premises/reasons a teacher advanced in justifying a decision for using a particu-

lar language teaching method observed during the lesson. The selected situations were then analysed according to the aforementioned premises and in line with theories related to second language teaching. When analysing teacher's justifications, I read through the transcripts several times to be able to determine which premise was connected to a teacher's justification. There were some difficulties in classifying: some premises were easy to identify e.g. situational premises—when a teacher's decision is related to the context of teaching, others needed more thinking time because they could equally belong to other categories. However, I relied on the definition of each category and saturated them based on notes in my portfolio and my understanding as the research analysis progressed.

7.5.3 Analysing Teachers' Scaffolding of English Second Language Students' Study Processes

After having analysed the teaching methods and their justifications, I continued by analysing how teachers scaffold/support ESL students study processes. To do that, according to van Lier's (2007) suggestion, I had to specify which salient design features were present to facilitate students' participation in project work and tasks, how students' initiatives were noted, encouraged, highlighted and supported and which actions were autonomy-supporting van Lier (2007, pp. 58–59). Initial analysis focused on identifying teachers' scaffolding. As teaching progressed and instances for scaffolding became apparent in teaching episodes, these instances of scaffolding were recorded as units in the data. As patterns began to emerge from juxtaposing a) teachers' conceptions of scaffolding as found in the interviews with b) initial codes from observations, working ideas/hypotheses were formed regarding each teacher in terms of the guiding questions. These working hypotheses guided working back and forth between the data, reducing it to its gist. After reading through the data and the initial coding, I began focusing on the scaffolding process i.e. how teachers scaffold and what was scaffolded. This process led to the going back in the data and resulted in both refinement and expansion of the categories. The final categories indicated that scaffolding occurred both within the framework of a specific lesson and within teaching moments. Teachers focused their scaffolding on students' conceptual understandings, through contextual support in classroom environment and intersubjective engagement.

The analysis was content-based as I examined the data provided by the field-notes and interviews of the participating teachers. The reason was to cover their diverse views towards scaffolding. This also allowed me to examine themes in the data in the light of the teachers' scaffolding and the prevalence of certain categories in terms of the content of the teacher's lesson and whether particular approaches to scaffolding predominated.

8 Research Findings and Interpretations

This chapter will present the main research results of the current study and their interpretations. The central research task was to describe, analyse and interpret secondary school language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in Cameroon secondary schools by obtaining insight into their main language teaching methods, justifications of the use of these methods and the different ways teachers scaffold students' study processes. The first research question related to the main language teaching methods will be addressed through the analysis of the concept of method based on Richards and Rodgers (2001). Next the second research question focusing on the justifications of teachers' main language teaching methods, and finally the different ways teachers' scaffold students' study processes will be explicated.

8.1 Main Language Teaching Methods of Cameroon Teachers of English as a Second Language

This section answers the first research question: What are the main language teaching methods of Cameroon teachers of English as a second language?

As discussed in chapter 5, at the centre of the English language syllabus in Cameroon is a teaching approach with a seemingly simple maxim — teachers are required to use the Communicative approach to language teaching as a priority and lessons should be student-centred and skill-based. Of course, as noted earlier, change in conceptions and practices is not readily achieved by administration mandate or policy: it requires far deeper and more fundamental approaches by the main agents, in this case the Cameroon ESL teachers in secondary school. The change from teacher-centred to student-centred should be reflected in the selection of the teaching methods employed in the classrooms as this provides one indicator of how teachers' roles have altered.

Bell (2007) argues that knowledge of methods is equated with a set of options, which empowers teachers to respond meaningfully to particular classroom contexts. In this way, knowledge of methods is seen as crucial to teachers' growth. In this section, I will describe and analyse Cameroon teachers' main language teaching methods in ESL.

8.1.1 Elements of Teachers' Teaching Methods

In order to describe and analyse the main language teaching methods, a more comprehensive model for description and analysis of approaches and methods was selected as proposed by Richards and Rodgers (2001) (see section 2.3). Accordingly, each discussion of the concept of methods included the following elements — theory of language, pedagogical design and classroom techniques. Each of these elements had a particular function in teachers' discussion of their methods and implementation in the teaching–studying–learning process of ESL. From this analysis, the role of teachers is then interpreted in the MAKER Framework (Fenster-

macher & Soltis, 2004), (section 4.3.1). The findings are based on face to face interviews, informal discussions, field notes and observation of teachers' lessons.

8.1.1.1 Theory of Language

The first basic element underlying teachers' methods in English language was their personal theory of language. The content analysis of the participating teachers' discussions regarding their theory of language indicates that some teachers explicitly stated their theory of language being communicative or within the Communicative Language Teaching approach. The five teachers emphasised the importance of using English to communicate meaning to their students, make the lesson student-centred so their students can use English or 'talk'. Preference for communicative theoretical principles was obvious. For example, Teacher 2 explained:

(Q: What are the most important issues in language teaching at the moment?)
We talk of Communicative and interactive teaching with the teacher being the facilitator, ...a lesson should be student-centred, you try to centre on the students...they [language research] say a teacher should not talk ninety-nine to one hundred percent, you [teachers] have to use all sorts of methods to try to make the students talk or understand something (T2) .

Here, the teacher recognises the focus on communicative and interactive teaching, where the primary function of language is to engage students in activities for communication and interaction. She also points to the basic condition needed to promote second language teaching—studying—learning—to make lessons 'student-centred' wherein students need to participate and use language. Teacher 2 also stresses the meaningfulness principle; 'try to make the students talk or understand something' which reveals how to engage students in authentic language use. This response highlights not only the teacher's awareness of the communicative theory of language but also the role of the teacher as facilitator within this approach.

Another teacher (T3) focuses on the meaning of language in the life of the students by emphasising that the goal of every language teacher should be to give students opportunities to work on language as it is used in daily life:

As a language teacher, at the end of every lesson, the students must be able to apply it [the lesson] to their daily life situation; you must create a daily life situation where the students can use those elements there (T3).

In this explanation, Teacher 3 clearly appreciates that classroom language should have a connection to language as used in everyday situations in real-life communication. I observed that teachers chose reading/listening comprehension texts which students could easily relate to for example 'AIDS in our midst', 'Press Freedom' and 'Polygamy' (Field Notes, 22 February). Clearly, providing meaningful language for understanding and connecting with life outside the classroom stood out as important in the practical teaching context.

Additionally, teachers' theories contained broader meanings within two main categories related to approaches expressed in functional and skill-learning theories.

8.1.1.2 Functional Theories

In relation to the functional theory of language, the five teachers generally acknowledged that their students learn a language by using it to communicate in classroom activities. They also believed that increased dialogue in the classroom creates an interactive meaning-negotiating learning context for ESL students. In the case below, Teacher 4 with 13 years of teaching experience shows her understanding of the role of dialogue in a communicative classroom:

I think that errr...there are certain things that are not necessary like where they [pedagogic inspectors and textbooks] put emphasis, reading comprehension in English language from form one to form five...there should be a lot of dialogue instead..., they come up with interesting passages...where children [students] will be motivated or have a situation where a lot of dialogue will be done in their classes, so that children [students] will be able to use English language rather than silent reading, because the methodology we use for reading comprehension is silent reading, but I think that rather dialogue where by students will be given the opportunity to speak a lot in class will be better (T4).

This extract suggests that providing meaningful language to the students and the possibility for real communication supports interaction and motivates students to engage in discussions with their peers. Teacher 4's comment highlights not only the importance of paying attention to the possibilities offered by the students' environment, but also to the way that students can respond more positively to the linguistic affordance—[dialogue]during classroom interaction. Therefore, it can also be argued that the use of dialogue in the teaching–studying–learning process of ESL promotes the goal of interaction between and amongst ESL students.

8.1.1.3 Skill-Learning Theories

It was important for the five teachers to teach language skills and equally foster integrated practice of these four skills — listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers saw their efforts as focused on students' use of language skills to learn and to interact. The five teachers focused on developing these skills saying that they want students to learn the four skills and use them in future communication. Teacher 5 stated that integrated practising of the four skills was an important objective in the English language lesson:

... you also know there are different skills that you are supposed to impact to your students, we have the four major skills, listening, reading, writing and speaking and the sub-skills of grammar and vocabulary, but we should also note that you cannot treat a particular skill as an individual. Let's say you want to teach writing and you know as a good teacher you can use writing to teach the sub-skills of vocabulary, grammar, you can use listening to teach the sub-skill of writing too, so the skills are interwoven. (T5)

The core of such understanding is based on the principle that for instance, communicative activities include integrated practising of the four language skills. Teacher 5 clearly prefers integrated practise of four skills as a basis for engaging her students, for instance, through the writing skill, students can practice vocabulary, grammar and listening in the same lesson.

From observation and in line with Teacher 4's observation, all textbooks for example 'Integrated Skills in English' presented a topic (Circumcision), a reading passage, listening passage, speaking activities and writing activities for students. However, as she noted, the textbooks had too many reading exercises with the focus on silent reading. When asked to elaborate on this feature the national pedagogic inspector for language teaching responded:

...we are putting a lot of emphasis on all the four skills especially reading, reading because we discover that in Cameroon very few people read and it all begins with the way students are brought up in the schools¹⁴, they don't read. So we try as much as possible to encourage extensive reading in our schools,... we try to see how much we can help to get our teachers first of all to understand the importance of reading for the language learner, even for language acquisition, you know somebody said there are two ways of learning a FL either you live with them, you go and live with the native speakers then you can acquire it easily or you read yourself into it. So you can acquire it by reading, so we think that reading can be very useful in improving the language situation and the language performance of our students (Pedagogic Inspector for ESL teaching).

The pedagogic inspector's response not only highlights the cognitive and social dimensions of language learning as important when planning, and realising teaching-studying and communicative practice, but also the way language theories should respond to the context of the students in Cameroon. Therefore, the focus seemed to be on promoting the reading skill for the language performance of ESL students in this context.

My own observation, stemming from informal discussions with the five teachers during the field work is that they frequently emphasised different skills in the immediate classroom context depending on the practical needs of their ESL students as Teacher 3, for instance, noted:

I have a writing goal now because *as far as speaking is concerned it's far-fetched*, you hardly find them [students] communicating in English outside the classroom, you find them communicating only in French. So I am struggling to get them write because that will help them in their subsequent exams or whatever they want to do (T3).

Here, Teacher 3 recognises that teaching all four skills is useful for the communicative needs of her students but also acknowledges that getting to integrate these four skills especially speaking is 'far-fetched' because no English is heard or used

¹⁴ Italics in the excerpts is for emphasis as recorded during interviews.

outside the language classroom. For this reason, Teacher 3 sees a greater pay-off in her focus on one goal (writing) as a means to support her students in the examination. Teacher 4 also reported that her students had problems with speaking and needed to improve their speaking, when asked why Teacher 4 cited completion of her scheme of work as most important goal during her ESL lessons she explained:

(Probing Question: *If your problem is speaking, does completing your scheme assist the students get more out of this language?*) It won't. I know it won't, then I cannot concentrate on teaching these children how to speak English because at the end of the day, they will know how to speak English, but how will that help them at the end of course exams? (T4).

In this excerpt, Teacher 4 pays less attention to developing the speaking skills if she sees it as the first priority to help students in their end of course examination. These extracts illustrate how data aligned with this category seemed to suggest that teachers may be focused more on completing the content of curriculum and the classroom activities than the learning/studying outcomes for their ESL students.

The data showed that the five teachers are aware, in theory, that language is a system for expression of meaning with a communicative and interactive function. Knowledge of the theory of the nature of language, learning and teaching precedes an overall plan for the orderly presentation of materials. A consideration of the design of the learning and teaching activities, and of teacher and student roles may have an impact on the method in question and the significance of such methodological design is linked to pedagogical issues that will be discussed next.

8.1.2 Pedagogical Design

The second element of the five teachers' main language teaching methods consists of the pedagogical design in the immediate classroom context. All five teachers believed that teaching should be student-centred, meaning the students should take more control of the lesson and communicate and interact amongst themselves. They also acknowledged that the teaching context is bound up with uncertainty; thus the use of a method needs to respond meaningfully to a specific classroom context. However, the classroom dynamics revealed different roles for each teacher. At the pedagogical design level of the method analysis, I analysed a) the roles of teachers, b) the roles of students, and c) the role of instructional materials and their selection.

The role of the teachers, students and instructional materials was particularly focused on during observations in the classrooms. In the course of informal discussions particularly related to the CLT approach, the five teachers frequently discussed the role of the teachers, students and materials in the ESL classroom. Therefore, during the observation of the teachers' lessons, I made notes of their activities, students' activities and the method of the teacher. This was further enriched by the content analysis from the participating teachers' interviews, which emphasised the rationale behind their pedagogical design.

8.1.2.1 Teacher's Role

A teacher's role was identified based on observations of interactions between teachers and students and interviews. This description and analysis will be combined with the teacher's view of her role, theory of language, the observed teaching approach, classroom technique and ESL students' participation. I find it important to combine these descriptions because I was attempting to capture the dynamics of the classroom. By so doing, it is possible to achieve a deeper understanding of the main language teaching method in the ESL lessons. When discussing the teacher's role within the Communicative Language teaching approach, three teachers identified key roles: facilitator, transmitter and researcher. However, observation of the teacher's lessons indicate that teachers assumed markedly different roles while teaching remained mostly teacher-facilitated with the role of transmitter of knowledge emphasised. Based on the content analysis of the data, the comments of Teachers 4 and 5 focused on the role of teacher as researcher. For example, they stated that:

(Q: *What is your role as an English language teacher?*) When it comes to English language, you need to go out and do research, you need to sit in the net [internet], take books and read so that you too will be used to what you want to give your students..., teachers are unable to teach grammar and vocabulary, they run away from that section, most teachers are unable to teach sounds, we run away from that section, it [English] needs a lot of research (T5).

A good language teacher is that teacher who can make research, when we want to talk about vocabulary, *you have a textbook for grammar because they do exist*, you have a textbook for writing English language. I have a textbook on writing, they teach you official letters, you have that textbook (T4).

It may be that when teachers used the term 'research', they were, in fact, more interested in finding research-supported information to improve their teaching.

One teacher emphasising her role in establishing situations to promote communication in ESL lessons describes the teacher as *facilitator*:

The teacher is a facilitator... I organise group work, I give them [students] small games in English, I want them to communicate, for example, you come to class, you write a few words and you give them [students] in groups, take this word, what is it? Give the root, form the noun, verb, construct sentences... I use *practical examples*; "take this classroom as this", for them to see what I am talking about not to bring some abstract something in London and France, No, mostly they talk about Melen market, Mokolo market, the environment where they are, so they can practice (T1).

Here, Teacher 1 reports that she facilitates communication between students and states that being able to use examples from their environment engages students in her lesson. This means that she has better understanding of her students, which presents an important advantage in promoting better teaching and study processes.

The teacher also acknowledges an important responsibility to create situations likely to promote/facilitate communication.

Another teacher focuses on the type of teacher needed in the ESL classroom and analyses her role as transmitter of a body of knowledge. As she put it:

English language teachers should be teachers who are very lively, who make the class interesting, while you are teaching don't over put salt, don't over put humour in a lesson, just make the class interesting relative to the lesson and at the end you will discover that once you organise a class, students will always be there... the students will be jammed to capacity. Whenever I call a class, the student will go because you've made the students have confidence in you, the students should know that as you stand there, *you are an epitome of pass, what they want, they should look at you and see what they want from you, you too should be able to impact knowledge.* (T5)

In the view of Teacher 5, the best role for a teacher is using strategies in the ESL lesson that work well in enhancing students' confidence in the teacher. Therefore, students' success in learning and studying ESL depends on how well the teacher impacts/transmits knowledge to her students. With this comment, Teacher 5 seemed to pay less attention to the knowledge and role of students in her ESL language lesson. An overview on Teacher 5's classroom observations illustrates this point quite well.

The Dynamics of the Classroom

T5– Teaching Approaches: Unaware of English language students' knowledge

Teacher 5 who viewed herself as responsible for evaluating her ESL students, focused on discussions based on final examinations (see table 11). She rarely played an active role in establishing activities promoting communication amongst her ESL students. In an interview, Teacher 5 mentioned that she wanted her ESL students to have confidence in her:

You can teach the students and at the end, they don't know anything, but you want to tick yourself that you have met up with your objective? No! Some teachers fail to understand that if the students don't perform well, part of the responsibility is yours, and part is for the student... You know there are times for 50 minutes you can have just three minutes out of the lesson and *you impact a lot of knowledge to these students especially if your students have a lot of confidence in you.* You should be satisfied that at the end of the academic year you've impacted life, you've done something.

Because Teacher 5 believed that teachers are to blame if their students do not succeed in ESL final examinations, she mainly emphasised her role in evaluating ESL students. In her theory of language she emphasised that teaching the four skills and grammar are critical in ESL studying, and in several informal conversations, she stressed that students learn English to pass examinations. Teacher 5 attempted multiple ways of supporting her students' diverse needs in the ESL examinations.

Table 11. An Overview on Teacher 5

<i>Teacher's view of role</i>	<i>Theory of language</i>	<i>Teaching approaches</i>	<i>Classroom techniques</i>	<i>ESL students' participation</i>
Teacher works for evaluation of ESL students	Four skills and grammar important in T-S-L process of ESL	Teacher is unaware of ESL students' knowledge	Initiation, Response and Feedback Interactional pattern	Passive and isolated students
Teacher is responsible for evaluating ESL students	ESL learning for examination success	Teacher focuses on discussion based on final examinations	Pre-dominantly teacher-facilitated	

My close observation of her classroom showed that Teacher 5 focused on the skills and techniques in gaining knowledge for examinations. Seven of Teacher 5's 15 lessons focused on the grading structure in the final examination and she regularly discussed experiences at the evaluation centre of the final examination with her students. For example, in one of her lessons she told her students about written errors 'this is exactly what happens in the marking centre, when you write a bad essay, we[teachers] take it round and laugh' (Field Notes, February 26). She stated during an interview that teachers evaluated themselves after such final examinations and '*a person like me, I become worried in August when the results are about to come out. I become so disturbed more than the students because I want to see how my students have performed. I become so confused*'. Teacher 5 seldom called her students to share their experiences or ideas in a whole-group discussion. Teacher 5 led her classroom in a predominantly teacher-facilitated way and her ESL students were simply there in Teacher 5's classroom mostly listening to what she was saying.

Teacher 5 conducted a number of small-group discussions based on the final examinations. She usually started the week with popular topics (Computer risks, Terrorism, Violation of trade rights, Polygamy) from the Graded English 5 textbook, with an emphasis on the different sections in the ESL national examination such as composition writing, reading comprehension and directed writing. For example, Teacher 5 mentioned in class on Thursday morning that 'our topic for today is composition writing'. The students turned to the chapter in the textbook on 'Terrorism' wherein she discussed the reading passage with her students and asked them to write a composition about terrorism. However, she writes the various parts of the composition section on the board, [content=12 marks, expression= 16 marks, accuracy= 12 marks]. The teacher and the students discussed the grading of each section, and she stressed that students must avoid errors to get the marks for accuracy, she comments '*last few years in Bamenda, I was the highest marker with 600 scripts. Scripts were withdrawn and given to those who can mark well, not up to 40 students scored well, most scored 00 in accuracy, any candidate who earns two marks in accuracy will pass*'.

The next day, after Teacher 5 wrote 'directed writing' on the board, she brought out her didactic notes, put up an exercise on the board on 'who should make a marriage proposal, a man or woman?' Teacher 5 goes round the classroom

to correct some student's exercises. She asked three students to put up their writing exercise on the blackboard and jointly corrected the exercises on the board with her students. She read the introduction and asked 'if the content is on five, how many marks will you give this student?' She also provided feedback on other student's answers. Teacher 5 told her students to avoid memorising sample introductions and reminded them 'if there is one class I rely on for 50% in English it is this class'. Although many of the students seemed to be working on the directed writing exercise, few were engaged while others simply looked out of the window. Some appeared to be bored, stroking their hair or discussing with their classmates about some television movie.

The unintentional consequence of over-emphasis on discussions on the final examinations is that it disengaged the ESL students from the lesson, with the teacher's role very dominant and the lesson highly teacher-facilitated. Teacher 5 did not offer opportunities for students to share their own knowledge or become more responsible for their own learning. Teacher 5's teaching approaches targeted the final examinations and did not open possibilities to the students to participate in learning. In other words she limited opportunities for students to be engaged in meaningful dialogue. She placed more emphasis on skills and the *knowledge (K)*¹⁵ as dominant in her ESL teaching, paying relatively less attention to awareness of her student, the *Ends (E)* or what she wants her students to know and be able to do with the English language. However, as mentioned in section 2.2, the teacher plays a major role in the ESL classroom and is ultimately responsible for directing her students to the social and linguistic affordances in the classroom and to scaffold/support students for tasks to be completed successfully.

T1- Teaching Approaches: Unaware of the importance of errors in ESL studying

Teacher 1's notion of her role in the ESL classroom contrasted directly with those of T5 (see table 12).

Table 12. An Overview on Teacher 1

Teachers' view of role	Theory of language	Teaching approach	Classroom techniques	ESL students' participation
Teacher has full responsibility for teaching correct grammar to students	Four skills and grammar is necessary to ESL teaching-studying-learning	Teacher is unaware of the important role errors play in ESL teaching-studying-learning process	Emphasis on error correction	Involved in small-group discussions mostly interacting in French
Provides feedback to ESL students tasks	Errors are signs of poor ESL learning	Teacher uses error correction based on -1/2 points in ESL tasks		Mainly negotiating pre-determined content by the teacher

¹⁵ See section 4.1.3

Teacher 1 demonstrated a strong responsibility for teaching her students. She conducted a number of whole-group or small-group discussions throughout the semester engaging her students in communicating and error correction. She also encouraged students' participation by calling on them to share their answers with their peers. However, Teacher 1 was a teacher who *'loved to hear good English language and got interested in finding out errors people make. At a very tender age, I used to detect language errors'* and as an experienced evaluator of English Language at the national examinations in Cameroon for twenty years *'through the post discussion period of marking in the workshop, while you are marking you pick out errors'*. Teacher 1 was very concerned about the falling standards in ESL and identified grammar as a major problem area in ESL teaching–studying–learning. For example, Teacher 1 focused on the grammar and practice exercises from her textbook *'Living English Power 4—A new secondary English course for Cameroon'*. Teacher 1 mentioned in class on Monday *'Today we look at formation of nouns and then we can continue with prefix and suffix'* She defined the noun and students copy in their notebooks and later she worked on exercises with her students. Teacher 1 provided corrective feedback to students' written exercises and during such exercises (for example: Does Press Freedom exist?, Insecurity, Road accidents etc.) she emphasised *-1/2 for any error 'exchange your books with some other person from another desk and use a red pen when you ring any error and subtract -1/2 for each error and put the final mark on 20'* (Field Notes, 25th February). In an interview later, Teacher 1 explains why she focuses on correcting errors:

It is very important; a few of them do not go back to these errors again. When I am marking written work, when I see the same error I have corrected in class with their friends (students), I ring and ask *'how many times has this error been corrected?'* I really ask the question on their papers, I think that is my own small way of struggling to help them remember what I teach them'.

The teacher's intention to correct errors as soon as they appeared was, in principle, not only beneficial for her ESL students but an important role she occupied because providing feedback to students and noting errors to be worked on during more accuracy based activities are potentially useful tasks undertaken within the CLT (see section 4.1.1). However, teachers' attitude to errors is important. Teacher 1 felt a little frustrated by students' errors and blamed the poor professional training of ESL teachers *'I realised that some of the teachers have a lot of problems in English language. So if you try in English language as a subject and the other teachers come and make errors and the students go ahead and copy'*. She believed that the failure to assist the ESL students at home contributed to the falling standards. She expressed her frustration in these words:

The success rate is very discouraging, most of the students are francophone so that when they stand up to make sentence in English they are talking French in English. You give an assignment they come back nobody to help them because their parents don't understand a single word in English, in class, you discover that as you are teaching they are writing French sentences...if I give

you an example of an essay composition written in the first term and then one that they will write now, you realise the same errors coming up, then you start asking ‘is it that you don’t understand? *Can you imagine that a student in form 5 cannot effectively write 450 words in English without not less than 50 mistakes?*

Teacher 1’s teaching approaches allowed students to benefit from communication with their peers in small group discussions. However, Teacher 1 put more emphasis on the errors than letting students take responsibility for their learning or in making themselves understood in the group discussions — even if their knowledge of the target language was incomplete. The teacher’s frustration concerning ESL students’ errors resulted in a negative attitude towards errors rather than profiting from noticing them. As indicated in Chapter 2, the era when errors were viewed as deviations from correct linguistic norms and, therefore, had to be treated with a negative attitude changed. In fact errors are inevitable and even desirable, because all learners, including teachers, can learn how to profit from them.

T 2-Teaching Approaches: Encouraging interested students

Teacher 2 who viewed herself as a teacher for all interested ESL students, focused on discussion- based approaches from her didactic notes (see table 13). In about 14 of the 20 lessons observed, she rarely played an active role to assist all her ESL students to be fully engaged in her ESL lessons. In an interview Teacher 2 mentioned that she wanted to do her ‘best’ as an ESL teacher. For example, Teacher 2 explained:

I think there is total lack of discipline because put two schools side by side, a mission and a government school you’ll see the students attitude completely different. Students in the government school are indisciplined, there is total *laissez faire*... teachers are insecure, the other day a student shot a teacher in the North, there’s general lawlessness...ah I can try my own little level to do the *best* I can, if any person at his own level is doing his or her *best* there can be some silver lining somewhere in the dark cloud.

The negative student behaviour she had witnessed or experienced indicates that controlling and improving student behaviour was viewed as a major part of the challenge in engaging students. Teacher 2, therefore, rarely approached her ESL students unless they asked for help, she seldom encouraged all to share their ideas in group discussions. Teacher 2 facilitated all communications between herself and her ESL students in a really ‘relaxed’ way. (I define *relaxed* here generally, such as allowing students to talk more during her lesson and allowing individuals to choose if they want to sit in the lesson or walk out). Teacher 2 encouraged students who wanted to participate in her lesson and provided students with choice, her students could choose which partners to work with and express their opinion when they wanted to. Teacher 2 did not force her students to answer questions that she posed. To talk or not to talk, to be physically present or completely absent from the lesson was the student’s choice and Teacher 2 respected it.

Table 13. An Overview on Teacher 2

Teacher's view of role	Theory of language	Teaching Approaches	Classroom techniques	ESL students' participation
Teacher works for interested students	Language is for communication and teachers have to use all methods to make students understand something	Teacher uses discussion-based approaches focusing on her didactic notes	Initiation, Response, and Feedback Interactional pattern	Students have unrestricted freedom of communication
Teacher does not assume full responsibility for teaching ESL students			Teacher-facilitated, /engages interested students	Not enthusiastic about language study

Teacher 2 usually started the week and lessons with popular news stories such as ‘football games, television shows, local news items (water problems/ theft, road accidents etc.)’ For example, Teacher 2 initiated a discussion by asking her ESL students on Thursday ‘Did you watch the football match yesterday?’ Many of the students talked about the match and the poor play style of the Indomitable Lions.¹⁶ The issue of the rough play of the Lions was lively discussed among the students while others shared some stories about the other team mates. Teacher 2, however, did not participate in the discussion, after the discussion she wrote ‘Time Sequence Markers’ on the board. Teacher 2 defined time sequence markers, put up the definition on the board. After reading a passage from her didactic notes to the students, she then put up an exercise ‘Rearrange the following sentences using time sequence markers to indicate the order in which the process of opening a new private secondary school will be carried out’ However during the correction phase of this lesson, Teacher 2 called on students who were willing to share their answers.

Teacher 2's next lesson focused on Cause/Effect relationship, a grammar lesson from her textbook,—‘Passport to English 4’. Again as Teacher 2 implemented the lesson, she gave a definition and had some discussions with the students using the time sequence markers she introduced, for ‘because, consequently, that explains why’. After this discussion, she dictated a passage from her didactic notes for the students to copy. While some students copied the passage in their exercise books, others did not copy and simply put their head on the bench—one student commented ‘we are sleepy’. However, Teacher 2 continued with a practice exercise ‘I will give you some sentences and you will rewrite using cause/effect relationship’. Here too, Teacher 2 mostly called only those students who raised their hands to answer her questions. Throughout the semester this routine remained more or less the same in more than 10 out of 20 lessons observed for Teacher 2. Teacher 2's classroom was a ‘place’ in which she allowed her students’ unrestricted interactions with one another but did not elicit all her ESL students’ responses. As noted from my observations, the relationship (R) between Teacher 2 and her ESL stu-

¹⁶ Cameroon football Team

dents was very weak and her students' attitude showed lack of enthusiasm for English as a subject. For example, in one of her lessons she announces 'Next week I will not be in class, and her students all shouted in jubilation (Field notes, April 20).

As regard Teacher 2's theory of language, she discussed about the communicative emphasis in language teaching and believed that teaching should be student-centred and using multiple means to make students understand something. Nonetheless, Teacher 2's classroom approaches did not offer opportunities for all her ESL students to actively participate in the learning events. Teacher 2 focused on knowledge of grammatical structures from sources—internet, didactic notes, texts to enable her students acquire language knowledge from these sources.

T3-Teaching Approaches: Facilitating communication between students and texts

Teacher 3's notion of her role and her teaching approaches and role contrasted with those of Teacher 2 (Table 14). Teacher 3 demonstrated a strong commitment in teaching her ESL students. Teacher 3 viewed teaching as a 'call' and therefore strongly believed that she could use her teaching skill to 'impact knowledge on kids [students]'. Throughout the semester in more than 10 of 18 lessons observed, she encouraged her ESL students' participation by calling on them to share their opinions on different topics from the textbook 'Graded English 5'. Teacher 3 believed that teaching ESL students was her responsibility, she attempted multiple ways of supporting their diverse needs in the classroom and 'struggling to get them not only communicate but get them to have the certificate [GCE ordinary level] in order to operate in the future'.

From the beginning, Teacher 3 considered the examination demands of her ESL students and how to support them as she designed and implemented lessons from the textbook. For instance, in an early lesson, she began with a review of previous work 'narrative essays', modelled correct responses as she discussed her actions and then presented more details about the narrative essay. When teaching this lesson, Teacher 3 focused on the story in the textbook 'A Squint for Samarina' to illustrate the different stages of a narrative essay. She read the story and initiated a discussion on the pattern of the narrative essay discussed 'exposition, complication, crisis, climax, and resolution'.

Table 14. An Overview on Teacher 3

Teacher's view of role	Theory of language	Teaching Approaches	Classroom techniques	ESL students' participation
To support ESL student through relevant textbook topics	Language is for Communication and interaction	Text based approach	Initiation, Response and Feedback Interactional pattern	Highly interactive with teacher and text based practice exercises
Provides feedback on students tasks	Speaking is ' <i>farfetched</i> '; hence the focus on writing is relevant for examination	Teacher focuses on discussions based on textbook topics	Teacher-facilitated focusing on textbook topics	Mainly negotiating pre-determined contents from textbook

Teacher 3 then moved on to the cause-to-effect pattern on p. 37 of the textbook. Again Teacher 3's students continued to work with the story and check the cause-to-effect pattern while she went round to ensure that all were working as instructed. After correcting some students' answers, she moved on to an exercise instructing her students to use the details learnt in Units 1 and 2 of how a story is generated to write an essay on the topic 'confessions of a Sad Past'. Realising the students turned to their books, she recaptured the attention of the class saying, 'write on a piece of paper, not more than a page'.

In the next lesson, Teacher 3 encouraged her students to read their written work to the class. She called a few students to read their essay. Two examples of the essays that her students read included 'the dark rainy day' and 'broken affair'. Although many students did work on the written assignment, few were willing to read their essays in class. However, Teacher 3 moved on to the topic of the day which she wrote on the board 'making plans for narrative essay'. The teacher and students discussed the pattern of the essay and how to make plans on a topic. Turning to the textbook, she reminded the students what they are supposed to do saying 'choose any of the topics in your textbook and write out a plan following the examples we just discussed'.

Her students worked on the exercises while the teacher moved round the class checking and correcting students' plans. From time to time, she stopped to make comments to the whole class on the possible way a student was supposed to have outlined his plan. She then concludes her lesson with an exercise in the same chapter asking students to read the two reading comprehension passages and answer the questions that follow plus the vocabulary exercise. In Teacher 3's classroom, irrespective of whether she started with warm-up activities or in main activities, her teaching approaches targeted textbook topics especially focusing on the four skills and grammar, thus opening up possibilities for students to be engaged in negotiating this content. Teacher 3's classroom was a place where she instructed and facilitated communication between her students and the textbook. Teacher 3 believed that the recent emphasis on the communicative skill and using language to interact and successfully communicate is very relevant to this context. For example, she explained:

...the tendency is that students speak English language only in the classroom...even in an English language class they sometimes communicate in French... we need to get them to be more productive in the language.

While Teacher 3 intends to succeed in encouraging her students to speak English, she also articulated the belief that it, in fact, was unrealistic to try focusing on her students' speaking skill while they need to write an examination in the future.

T4-Teaching Approaches: Embracing ESL students' needs

Teacher 4, who viewed herself as a teacher that all ESL students can approach, also demonstrated a strong responsibility for teaching her students (See Table 15). Teacher 4 loved teaching, not only because she thought she will be good as a teacher, but 'because of time, I know that they [teachers] have a lot of time'. Teacher 4 believed that most of her students needed time to support their study of ESL especially because of their francophone background — meaning they did not speak English with their peers or at home with their parents. My close observation of her classroom showed that Teacher 4 used many intentional approaches to include ESL students in her teaching activities, to embrace their background and to help them overcome their speaking difficulties.

Table 15. An Overview on Teacher 4

Teacher's view of role	Theory of language	Teaching Approaches	Classroom techniques	ESL students' participation
Teacher attempts to address speaking difficulties of ESL students	Language should be used in interaction and communication	Teacher builds a community of students through project work	Interacting, asking questions and providing feedback to students response	ESL students are confident and active
Teacher works to support students' speaking skills	Encourages ESL students to speak	Supports and encourages discussions based on text-book topics	Encourages and engages students to share their experiences on topics discussed	ESL students fully cooperate in communicative activities in the lesson

Teacher 4 considered the speaking needs of her students as she designed and implemented her lessons. Therefore, in order to encourage students to speak English, she often invited them to join in classroom activities by allowing them to share their experiences and sustain their interest in her lessons. For example, Teacher 4 brought in two bottles of water to her lesson on Tuesday, one dirty and one clean. Showing these two bottles of water to her class, the teacher generated questions 'look at these bottles of water: which one is good for drinking and why? Where do people carry water in town and in the villages? What is the importance of water to a community? The students were highly interactive and excited about this issue, and many students talked about the water crisis around their neighbourhood. Several students talked about the health issues related to drinking contaminated water 'diarrhoea, cholera etc.'

The teacher went on to a discussion focusing on some key words 'pipe borne water, piped water, siblings, health problems' before reading the passage from her textbook 'Stay Tuned' entitled 'The importance of water in a community' The story was about difficulties to fetch potable water and the struggle with health problems caused by drinking dirty water in Mbinya's household. After reading aloud, Teacher 4 encouraged her students to read the passage silently and to share their experiences if they are similar to Mbinya's in the reading comprehension passage. Some students shared experiences about walking long distances to find clean water and she went to talk to another student who shared her own experience when she got diarrhoea. Teacher 4 then engaged her students in a project 'imagine that you were a doctor, what advice will you give to the people of this community to avoid health problems?'

Teacher 4's attempt to embrace the speaking needs of her students was consistent throughout the semester. She asked her ESL students to share their opinions such as 'How do you feel about that? What is your belief?' For instance, while teaching the reading comprehension lesson on 'prostitution', she encouraged her students to discuss with their peers possible reasons why people engage in this practice. In another lesson on picture interpretation, Teacher 4 used a radio and mobile phone to generate discussions in her lesson. Her students showed interest and asked several questions. One of the questions included the use of the mobile phone on a public transport. After that, Teacher 4 introduced the lesson for the day from the textbook asking them questions for example, 'Who are those in the picture? What are they doing? What is the man holding in his hand? Where are the journalists? What do you think the journalists are doing? What is a walkie-talkie used for?'

She asked her students to work on practice exercise on p. 118 of their textbook and she continued with a discussion on the uses of a radio. She added 'I use my radio to listen to news, music, stories'. She also asked the students about their favourite radio programmes and asked them to write it in their exercise books. These examples show that Teacher 4 provided students with opportunities to practice speaking during her ESL lessons. This further encouraged and offered them opportunities to participate in activities. Teacher 4 consistently worked to build a strong 'community' of students through pairing them in project work in writing and reading articles for a class magazine. This project work motivated students to cooperate in her ESL lessons and my interview transcripts indicate that the teacher and students benefitted 'they [students] could write really good essays, they enjoyed it and I loved my English class.' Teacher 4 emphasised that paying attention to the speaking problems of ESL students could not be accomplished by her alone. She believed that selecting appropriate textbooks/materials which support students' communicative language proficiency through meaningful dialogue was a way to help ESL students.

To accomplish this, Teacher 4 usually generated lots of discussions in grammar and reading comprehension passages. She asked her students to share their experiences in the hope that it might be helpful for her ESL students to understand the importance of practicing, to use their language skills according to very different situations as presented in the textbook passages. Teacher 4's teaching approach

allowed her students to use language in interaction with their peers. To Teacher 4, teaching ESL students' who mostly use English only in the classroom activities was not a source of frustration. Through her practice exercises, Teacher 4 attempted to accommodate their speaking difficulties rather than 'give up' on the incomplete mastery of English and the occasional interferences of French in the practice exercises. The ESL students participated actively in Teacher 4's classroom and they looked more comfortable and worked well in trying to negotiate meaning in the practice exercises, even though their knowledge of English was incomplete. In spite of all this, Teacher 4 was very conscious about evaluating her students and the focus on examinations. She also emphasised completing her syllabus because she believed that 'students learn this language [English] because they want to pass an exam at the end of the year'.

To summarise, based on my experience as a teacher and student in Cameroon, and the observations and interviews, it seems both possible and imperative that teachers' pedagogical roles could be widened and better discussed in teacher education programme to de-emphasise the stress on the single most important value of evaluation as it is at the moment. As for the teachers' role, it would seem that there is a difference between teaching some content knowledge, maximising learning potential through problem-solving activities and problem posing activities.

Kumaravadivelu (2003), as mentioned in Chapter 4, maintains that in order to shape the practice of every-day teaching, teachers need to have a holistic understanding of what goes on in their classroom, and they need to be strategic thinkers who reflect on the needs, wants and processes of learning and teaching, and to be strategic practitioners who need to develop knowledge and skills necessary to self-observe and self-evaluate their own teaching acts. This underscores the importance of the holistic view of language learning mentioned in Chapter 4. As noted, the language-didactic perspective, humanistic experiential, cognitive-constructivist, socio-constructivist and socio-cultural approaches do not compete or rule out each other but are complementary.

The holistic view on learning a second language requires, therefore, that enough attention should be paid to the cognitive, social and affective dimensions of language learning when planning and realising teaching, studying and communicative practice. As emphasised, for optimal results, a second language cannot be studied or practised as units detached from the context, but it requires that the students elaborate and autonomously generate language in context-based and meaningful communication in social interaction.

8.1.2.2 Students' Role

The description and analysis of students' role is based on the teachers' interviews and some observation data. In response to the question 'What is the role of the students in your ESL classroom?' All five teachers basically acknowledged the role of the students as active participants in the teaching–studying–learning process. They also believed that students can construct their own knowledge in joint interaction with their peers. Based on their experiences, the source of knowledge is not only the teacher; students themselves can actively participate in learning activities in the ESL lesson and construct their own knowledge. In addition, the need for

students to take ownership of their own learning emerged as a topic, which is typically recognised as a ‘good’ role for the student. Teachers described the role of their ESL students, for example, in this way:

Candidates [students] are not empty, they are supposed to construct their own ideas, they are not empty bags for you to come and fill. They have something within them and so encouraging the thinking skill is good. They should think, they should always think and bring out ideas because you as a teacher you learn every day. (T5)

There is this new methodology that says students should talk and bring out what is in their mind because they are not empty vessels ...they say that we teachers should not bring new theories to come and put like you bring water to fill the container because the container was not empty, just that there is water inside which was maybe dirty, didn’t know sand from mud, so that’s how we view the students now, we teachers just have to help them now to select the good ones and bad ones. (T4)

With comments like these, the teachers believed students can contribute to the teaching–studying–learning process because their brains are not empty: They are not ‘tabula rasa’. The awareness that students were present in the language lesson with some knowledge reveals how this view helps shape teachers’ teaching style. Teacher 4 and Teacher 5 seemed to be building on the metaphor of filling containers to make connections to the role and view of the student in the ESL classroom.

However, other teachers emphasised the challenge in teaching students who cannot support their own personal study. For example, Teacher 1 explained:

There are a lot of books but they [students] don’t read, the success rate is very discouraging, most of the students are francophone, so when they stand up to make a sentence in English, they are talking French in English. You give an assignment they go back home nobody to help them because their parents don’t understand a single word in English, *first of all they don’t read, they don’t even do the assignment*. In class when I am going around, you discover that as you are teaching they are writing French sentences, is a problem, is a very big problem and they just let things go; everybody let them go (T1).

From observations, informal discussions and individual interviews, students were frequently portrayed as passive and unwilling to take ownership of their own learning through personal study, for example, Teacher 2 explained:

Students! There are *many of them who are not willing to learn*, you give them assignments they take it for a joke and they don’t bother to do it (T2).

This description depicted students as mainly passive—not motivated or active in their study of ESL. Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out that the co-operative (rather than individualistic) approach to learning stressed in the in CLT may likewise be unfamiliar to learners, consequently CLT methodologist recommend that

successful communication is an accomplishment jointly achieved and acknowledged (p.166).

One may, therefore, argue that successful participation and communication in the English lesson is jointly achieved. This is supported in the socio-constructivist theory of language learning and teaching as mentioned in Chapter 4 of the current study, which posits that students learn a second language in interaction with peers and teacher. Therefore, in classrooms rich with social interactions, a teacher or more able peers are able to provide guidance that supports students' development. It is this learning in a group or learning together that is stressed, as opposed to constructivism which focuses on an individual's own learning processes.

8.1.2.3 Role of Materials and Their Selection

Change in teaching approach or style in using new materials and resources is amongst the most visible aspects in communicative language teaching, and perhaps the easiest to observe. However, simply providing teachers with materials and new resources is one thing, having them use these in educationally appropriate and effective ways is quite another. Here we need to bear in mind Richard and Rodger's (2001, p. 168) reminder that practitioners of CLT view materials as a way of influencing the quality of classroom interaction and language use.

The five ESL teachers involved in this study agreed that change in the use of materials in teaching ESL was necessary, largely due to what they saw as an excessively authoritarian approach to schooling in government secondary schools, combined with the rigidities imposed by Cameroon's Ministry of Education. The five teachers mostly commented on the use of text-based material for ESL teaching as simply a guide:

(Q: how do you use the textbook in teaching English?) The textbook acts as a teaching aid, it is not that you must use it like a bible, get a grammar point for example, explain, get a few examples from the textbook and I keep it and that's that, then I use a lot of practical examples to bring out the item I am teaching, get them construct sentences using the structure you got from the textbook, they get practical examples, talk about football, they like football a lot, practical things that they do in class and outside. (T1).

While Teacher 1 talks about using the textbook as a guide to assist students' communicative language use whereby teachers connect information from text-based materials to real life events out of the classroom, this did not always indicate a common practice for language teachers. The five teachers acknowledged that using the textbook slavishly is a common practice amongst language teachers.

This observation is underpinned by comments in the preface in the syllabus and scheme which clearly states that:

Recommended textbooks are expected to cover the syllabus required for each level of a course. However, textbooks are not necessarily arranged as logical simple to complex packages, that teachers can un-package with ease and little planning. This implies that the teacher has a near laborious if not laborious task planning and deciding on what to teach and when to do so. The conse-

quence is some teachers become glued to the textbook and use it as a recipe, following it page by page so as not to go wrong. These are the 'I can't do without the textbook' type. Others sometimes decide to scan through the textbook sorting and teaching only the simple aspects while neglecting the aspects and structures which they find more difficult. Experience has proven that when a teacher uses a textbook slavishly, that teacher invariably finds it difficult to finish the material contained in the textbook before the end of the academic year. (MINEDUC, 2004)

Another teacher also believed in incorporating outsource materials to make the lesson rich and avoid negative judgement from her students, as illustrated in the following quotation:

What I mean by not relying on textbooks for example, you may have a lesson in grammar, you have a right to go out and do research and bring it to class so that the students will know this teacher is hard working. Some students already know that every day madam comes to class errr...section a, reading comprehension...that's not what it's supposed to be, when in the reading exercises which you want to pre-teach vocabulary, you have the right to bring things from outside to come now merge with what is in the textbook and make lessons rich. (T5)

One teacher recognised the importance of materials which support meaningful language use but expressed the difficulty of using such materials in this context. Teacher 3 put forward that:

...if you want to use let me say a visual strategy and the classroom does not have electricity as the classrooms here do not have, there are no sockets where you can use an electrical device, that one is already ruled out as it is said if the students see something they will understand better except something that you draw or a picture that you bring, that possibility is ruled out. (T3)

From my experience as a teacher and student in this context, realia or the use of 'authentic', 'from life' materials in the English language classroom is encouraged in teacher education and especially during teaching practice. However, when teachers start their professional careers, they more or less abandon the use of these materials which one may argue do not have to do only with listening from the radio but include e.g. articles from magazines, advertisements, maps, pictures, graphs, charts, weather forecasts, newspapers and different kinds of objects around which communicative activities and exercises can be built in the language lesson.

One of the results arising from this study is that Cameroon's ESL teachers were quite literally lost without appropriate or suitable text-based materials and learning resources. One teacher advanced trenchant criticism on the selection of textbook for language teaching which she held to be fraught with errors and limited communicative language use. She noted

...reading comprehension is rampant, they do it a lot in our textbooks, I don't know why every unit has a reading comprehension passage, then, they don't encourage writing a lot, that's the problem we had with the textbook,...we follow the textbook somehow, unit one there's a reading comprehension passage and below it a grammar lesson, a vocabulary lesson...that particular book didn't really encourage writing...*the reading comprehension passages whereby answers were supposed to be provided in the teacher's guide, most of the answers were wrong.* That book was a *real mess* I don't know what criterion was used in the ministry to select the textbook as one of the official textbooks in Cameroon. (T4)

Speaking about the politics involved in the textbook selection another teacher noted

...the nature in which they select their textbooks, there is a lot of *MAFIA* in the way the textbook required for this subject is concerned, there are some teachers you just write trash because you go and give money, you go and corrupt them [Education Ministry Officials], they accept that and put it in the programme without taking into consideration certain factors. (T3)

In the focus group exercise, the problems of such textbooks were also highlighted by the teachers in the following written comments

Course books are dictated or imposed on teachers and teachers merely ask students to read the course books imposed on them,

Textbooks with farfetched ideas such as snow, computers, western seasons like winter, summer etc. which the students have never experience appear strange and unfounded,

The selection of textbooks is not based on merit. This kills the initiative of better textbook writers.

The ministry imposes textbooks and course materials on the teachers without letting teachers have a say and not even taking into consideration needs of the students. (Problem maps)

Interestingly perhaps, even the policy maker was quick to acknowledge the failure of Ministry officials to assist in the selection of appropriate materials which take in to consideration the ESL students' needs

(Q: *when we talk about course books that are inadequate, does it mean that in Cameroon we lack initiative to write good course books?*) No; it is that errr... we used to have what we call a centralised curriculum and in that centralised curriculum, it is the centre, the authority, the ministry of education that dictates and selects which course books to be used in each school and *we are saying that the body that does that selection most of the time they do not do a good job, again some people bribe their books into the official booklist, and once it gets into the official booklist, you cannot query the minister or the*

authority or the ministry as a whole. I just pointed a number of deficiencies in ‘Stay Tuned’ that is a course book. I followed up during teaching practice a certain treatment of Gerunds and the kind of definition that was given of Gerunds and *the teachers I followed up, just followed what was in the textbook and he said “a Gerund is a noun formed from a verb ending in ‘ing’,” it was scandalous* and I said but “where did you get this” and he opened the book and showed me and the thing was staring at me in the eye and then I saw many other things. (Pedagogic Inspector for English language teaching)

From the information I obtained, it is this ritual of fraud influencing the selection of text-based materials that emerges as a major concern for teachers and some policy makers involved in teaching ESL. The teachers in my study reported that they found the corruption in the selection of the textbooks confusing and costly to the students each time they had to reject a textbook in the middle of the school term. Expecting teachers to select and obtain textbooks and teaching and learning resources without adequate support and guidance was a clear omission, more so, since most of the teachers in this study are relatively experienced—nearly half of them having more than nine years teaching experience and formally trained in ESL methods and practices. Without adequate support from the education ministry responsible for ESL, this has resulted in teachers simply adopting a passive technician role, as Kumaravadivelu (2006) calls it. One of the questions which remain, however, is whether excluding the teachers in the selection of text-based materials and support in communicative language teaching approach was by omission or commission, and while I can do no more than speculate, it is my view that teachers were quite deliberately left out of designing communicative, task-based materials to respond to student’s needs.

8.1.3 Classroom Techniques

Gibbons (2002) maintains that the classroom is a place where understanding and knowledge are jointly constructed between teachers and students (p.15). It is apparent that the ESL teachers in this study had certain approaches for getting students involved in the lesson. These classroom interactional patterns observed in ESL classrooms were further divided into two main categories, group-work and initiation, response, feedback/evaluation.

8.1.3.1 Group Work

In organising group work, the five ESL teachers expressed the view that peer scaffolding and support is achieved in group activities. In the view of these teachers, group work strategy was an important part of the student-centred method, which was effective in assisting students’ participation in ESL lessons

(Q: *Why use group work?*) Most often than not, I use the student centred method, I am helping some of them to be able to communicate, to be able to participate in class (T2).

Another teacher explains that she needs to check comprehension of the lesson. For example, Teacher 3 explained that:

...during the practice stage after the presentation of the lesson, I ask students to work on practice exercise in groups, this is to find out if students have understood the lesson...I want to ensure students understanding of the lesson (T3).

Another teacher believed that students could communicate and individual students are corrected and scaffolded by the group as a whole as she notes

... I set the pace, I teach the item, I give an example, and then I get them in groups, I get them to talk, I get them to correct. I am trying to make them realise their errors so that when you are corrected this time by your friends, the next time the next person commits the same error, you see that they boo at you in class (T1).

... Now it is more student-centred than teacher centred. So I always want to make students to talk more not that the class will come and be a class where the teacher gives only lectures...there are times you do pair the students together, you put them in groups, and you can even put them in rows. You put the rows on the board, a, b, c, d and you make like a small competition, the class becomes more lively,...you use that method to evaluate whether the students have actually understood, you go in for those candidates that are weak, so that the groups or rows *will continue to fail* so the others will spur them up, so next time, they'll be able to work hard (T5).

These extracts illustrate how data within this category suggests that some teachers may be focused more on the behavioural outcomes of class activities than providing pedagogical support and strategies which enable students develop understandings of ESL topics that they would not be capable of on their own. They seemed to tacitly acknowledge that they may be culpable for student disengagement 'they boo', 'rows will continue to fail'.

As indicated in chapter 4, the syllabus (Order No 1757/D/55 16/3/2004 MIN-EDUC/SG/IGPBIL) for teaching ESL emphasises that English language students should be taught in such a way that they are provided with study skills and strategies to cope with an ever changing world; in other words language should be taught for effective communication. It should be noted that the designers of this syllabus carefully spell out the methodology favoured in teaching ESL. They prescribe the communicative approach to language teaching as priority, the eclectic approach and encourage teachers to make lessons student-centred and skill-based and especially to get students to speak and do things with language in pairs and in groups. As I have noted elsewhere, individual teachers are responsible for selecting authentic and language-based realia and the most appropriate methods for their ESL classrooms.

My observation of the five teachers' lessons revealed that they rarely used group work strategies (observed in about half of 86 lessons observed for the five

teachers) in the English lessons. Some who used this strategy hardly supervised the group activity, three teachers prevented ESL students from using French in group work sessions. Consequently, such group activities hardly engaged ESL students but gave them opportunities to discuss in French and on topics not related to the content in the group activity.

These five teachers would profit from improving their skills in group-work and collaborative learning, although the environment, even within the Cameroon secondary schools, may militate against this, as it does not normally encourage group work and interactive language teaching (see section 8.2.4).

8.1.3.2 *Initiation, Response, Feedback*

The other dimension of classroom procedures mostly observed during the five teachers' teaching was found to be related to the Initiation, Response, and Feedback/evaluation (IRF) interactional pattern. The five teachers introduced a topic or content from the textbook; after having presented it, the teacher asked a question and the students answered and then the teacher provided feedback or asked another student for the correct answer.

Initiation Teacher: How many sections make up section two?

Response Student: three

Feedback Teacher: I am very surprised that at this stage you do not know how many, if you do not know you are working in the air

Initiation Teacher: How many marks for composition writing?

Response Student 1: thirty

Feedback Teacher: not quite

Response Student 2: forty

Feedback Teacher: Right (T5 Field Notes, March 25)

For example, in the introduction to one of Teacher 4's lesson, she asked the definition of a noun and a verb from her students. The answer was defined in chorus by the teacher and students. She then put up a sentence on the blackboard "cocoa is an export product, what is this? The students answer 'a noun'. Teacher 4 introduces a reading comprehension passage 'Trafficking and Prostitution', after reading the passage, she had students answer questions from the passage but offered little or no clarification on the meaning of trafficking and prostitution even when students noted that they did not understand the word. Here is her feedback 'you must not always think that you will get the meaning of the words from the dictionary, it is possible to look at the meaning of the word in context for example, 'there is a lot of trafficking in women going on' (T4 Field Notes, February 15).

It is important to note that the IRF interactional patterns are sometimes very useful; however, it is easy to see that they do not fulfil the need for students to produce comprehensible output and there is little opportunity for the students' responses/ language to be stretched, as discussed in the theoretical chapters of this study. Classroom procedures supportive of second language learning must, therefore, create opportunities for more varied and communicative language use to oc-

cur. Table 16 gives an overview of the elements of a method as discussed by the five teachers in comparison to the Communicative Language Teaching framework.

Table 16. Elements and sub elements that constitutes the five teachers' main language teaching methods in comparison to the CLT Framework

Type of communicative feature in this study	Theory of language and learning	Teacher's role	Student's role	Role of materials and selection	Classroom techniques and procedures
TEACHER 1	Teach four skills and grammar <i>Errors are signs of poor language learning</i>	A good ESL teacher is a facilitator <i>Teaches grammar and provide feedback to students' task</i>	Involved in group work and interacting in French	Mainly negotiating textbook content	Unsupervised group work Error correction based on -1/2pts in ESL tasks
TEACHER 2	Language is for communication and teachers use all methods to make students understand	A good ESL teacher should be innovative and creative <i>Teaches interested students and does not assume full responsibility for teaching ESL students</i>	ESL students are not interested in ESL study	Negotiating content from didactic notes	Interaction, response and feedback interaction pattern (IRF)
TEACHER 3	Language is for communication. <i>Speaking is far-fetched; so focus on writing is relevant for examination</i>	A good ESL teacher is a re-searcher <i>Supports students through textbook and provides feedback on students' task</i>	ESL students are highly interactive in text-based practice exercises	Discussion based approach on textbook topics	Interaction, response and feedback interaction pattern (IRF)
TEACHER 4	Language is for interaction and communication Students	A good ESL teacher is a re-searcher <i>Supports students speaking</i>	ESL students are confident and active	Discussion based approach in textbook and didactic notes	IRF and encourages students to share their experiences in ESL topics

	need to speak English	<i>skills and embraces ESL students' speaking difficulties</i>			
TEACHER 5	Teach four skills and grammar together	A good ESL teacher is a re-searcher <i>Evaluates and 'im-pacts' knowledge Teaches ESL for examination success</i>	ESL students are passive and isolated	Instruction based on final examination topics	IRF and discussions based on final examinations
Communicative framework	Language is a system for the expression of meaning	Instructor, Needs Analyst, Feedback, Researcher, Learner and Mentor	Cooperative participator in communication	Task-based, authentic, supporting communicative language use	Almost everything that is done in the class-room is accomplished with a com-municative intent

From these elements, an interpretation of the main language teaching approach is explained.

8.1.4 Interpreting the Results in the Main Language Teaching Methods of Cameroon Teachers of English as a Second Language

To summarise briefly the elements and sub-elements constituting the five participating teachers' main language teaching methods, we can note that their theories of language were functional—acknowledging that language should express meaning in communication and interaction. Richards and Rodgers (2001); Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) maintain that whenever possible, authentic language—language as it is used in a real context—should be the goal of classroom activities. They also explained that integrated teaching and practising of the four skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing develops communicative competence (see also Baten, Beaven, & Harjanne, 2011). Although the awareness of the functional approach may point to teachers' awareness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theory of language, it is worth remembering, as discussed in the theoretical chapters, that CLT approach has been dominant for the last 30 years till present. Therefore, this result was predictable because the five teachers are very aware of the communicative emphasis in language teaching promoted by the syllabus (Order No 1757/D/55 16/3/2004 MINEDUC/SG/IGPBIL) for ESL teaching and the Cameroon Ministry of Education and in language education. Even so, a recurring admission during the interviews, informal discussions and my observa-

tions reveal that this theory did not actually change their pedagogy or conception of language—*teaching for the examination*.

In the pedagogical design in the classroom, the five teachers were aware of the teacher's role in the CLT approach—researcher and facilitator, instructor (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Harjanne & Tella, 2009; Littlewood, 2011). However, the classroom dynamics revealed strikingly different roles for the teachers. The classroom dynamics showed that lessons were highly teacher-facilitated with Teacher 5 considering her role as imparting/transmitting a body of knowledge to the students. The classrooms were not very communicative and did not reflect CLT principles.

The focus in these lessons was on grammar and examinations and, as observed, the treatment of errors was significant. Errors were treated as deviations to be avoided and, when they persisted; four teachers considered this a sign of poor learning of ESL, which reflects older methodology and even behaviourism. As Sheen and Ellis (2011) claim, there is no evidence that corrective feedback needs to be provided in 'a window of opportunity' (pp.606–607). In this case, written corrective feedback which constitutes off-line or delayed correction can also promote linguistic development; however, teachers focused on more on-line/immediate correction. The meaning before accuracy principle in CLT approach was not evidenced by the five teachers. For this reason, I argue their approach was basically grammatical, not communicative.

In the five teachers' view students should be active participants in an ESL lesson. However, they were portrayed as mainly lazy and passive and not willing to take greater control of their studying. The results of the analysis of the pedagogical design also indicate that the selection of materials did not support communicative language use; the textbook remained the major resource for ESL lessons though two out of the five teachers used some didactic notes in their lessons.

When interpreting the results concerning the main language methods, we need to keep in mind the fact that knowledge of methods should provide a set of options which empowers teachers to respond meaningfully to particular classroom contexts. As Bell (2007) claims, teachers' attitude to methods is highly pragmatic. In this study, the teachers were encouraged through the syllabus, scheme of work, textbooks, pedagogic seminars and the Ministry of Education to be eclectic though it is recommended to use the communicative approach to language teaching as a priority (MINEDUC 2004, p. 24). However, it is to be noted, as mentioned in Chapter 4, that methods are not recipes which can be prescribed to teachers, neither it is enough for teachers to pay 'lip service' to some method but they must indeed understand and practice their convictions (Brown, 2007).

As argued in Chapter 4, and in line with Freeman and Anderson (2011), what is needed is not a universal solution in language teaching but a shift to localisation in which pedagogical practices are designed in relation to local contexts, needs and objectives. It seems appropriate to interpret the approach from the dominant elements present in the teachers ESL teaching classrooms in order to describe their approach to language teaching. According to Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004), teachers can adopt one of the three main three main approaches in teaching: Executive, Facilitator or Liberationist. They note that the *Executive approach* emphasises well-managed classrooms with a focus on effective teaching leading to profi-

cient learning. *The Facilitator* places the student's development as an authentic, self-actualised person as its most important goal and assigns a high priority to the teacher's gaining a deep understanding of her students, while the *Liberationist approach* attends to the pursuit of high ideas of intellectual and moral accomplishment through deep study of the disciplines combined with appropriate manner on the part of the teacher (p. 57).

The results of the analysis indicate that all five teachers observed focused on corrective feedback, the classrooms were teacher-facilitated and well managed with the textbook as the main instructional resource, as discussed in the pedagogical design of the classrooms in section 8.1.2. It was evident that acquiring some content knowledge was the primary goal of teaching ESL. This knowledge was treated as given as well as what appears in textbooks, syllabus and other learning goals determined by the Cameroon Ministry of Education. As a result, all but one teacher stressed the need for forging strong and powerful bonds between teacher and students, thus the dominant elements in teachers teaching appeared within the Executive approach (see figure 10)

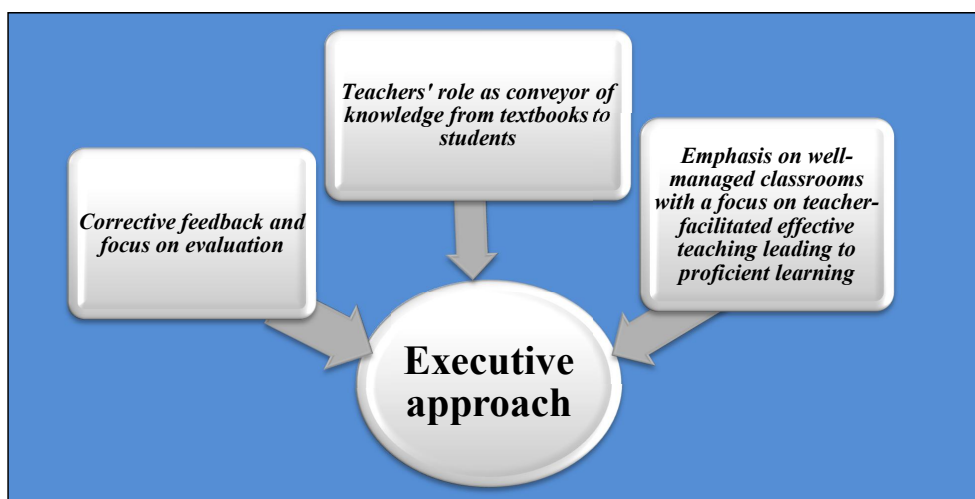


Figure 10. The main language teaching approach of English second language teachers according to the current study (based on Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004)

The results of the current study are in line with international research results (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005) which indicate that most second language (L2) teachers claim to be using Communicative Language Teaching approach but communicative classrooms are still a minority with most classrooms still teacher-centred and focusing exclusively on grammar or examinations.

8.2 Justification of the Main Language Teaching Methods of Cameroon Teachers of English as a Second Language

The analysis of the five Cameroon language teachers' justifications of their main language teaching methods will give answers to the second research question: *In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language justify the language teaching methods they use?*

Drawing on the interpretations of the previous section, reporting the elements and sub-elements constituting teaching methods and the interpretation of the main approach to teaching in ESL, one may ask how teachers reason or justify their pedagogical actions. Specifically, did the teachers offer any reasons for their pedagogical actions in the English Second Language classroom?

Based on the classroom observations and interviews, specific justifications were sought for pedagogical actions in the ESL classroom. The content analysis of participating teacher's justifications regarding the use of teaching methods observed suggests that their ideas were well aligned with the 'premises' based on the study of Fenstermacher and Richardson (1983) in which teachers used four kinds of premises: value, stipulative, empirical and situational.

8.2.1 Value Premises

Value premises are justifications for good to be derived from an action. In discussions about teaching, it is usual that the teachers make a great number of normative arguments regarding their pedagogical actions. These are usually based on the respect for students, commitment to teaching, and benefit for the students. In other words, the value of a teacher's method is seen as good or that it works for the benefit of the students. In the data, this is shown by Teacher 1 who insisted on correcting students' written and oral errors in all ESL lessons.

At the beginning of the language lesson on 'Prefix and Suffix,' the teacher reminded the students that in composition writing, they should use a lot of prefixes and suffixes. After defining and presenting examples, she gave some practice exercises to the students and she moved around and corrected some student's written work. While correcting, she emphasises to the class that 'you must bring a dictionary to class because you need to spell the words correctly'. She also corrected speaking mistakes when her students answered her questions and I observed that the teacher gave students clear instructions for correcting written exercises—that the students should correct their peers' exercises with a red pen, subtract -1/2 and put the sum total on 20. She also asked which students had scored 20/20, 19/20, 18/20 etc. From my observation, 35 minutes of the 50-minute lesson were devoted to practice and correction of practice exercises.

During the interview, I asked the teacher to explain why she focused on error correction; she justified her action this way:

It is very important to correct students errors, when you correct it or students correct the errors, there are some students who get the correct thing and they perfect their English language in writing and speaking with time. (T1)

These premises show how correction is perceived from Teacher 1's point of view. She values linguistic accuracy and at the same time she thinks corrective feedback as a key element that assists students to achieve self-correction. Although Teacher 1 has the students' level of development in mind when she corrects all oral and written errors in her ESL lessons, the possibility of eliminating errors relates to Teacher 1's view of her role as model for 'grammatically correct' features in her ESL lessons and errors as deviations to be avoided.

Treatment of errors and corrective feedback is one of the most controversial and frequently researched topics in SLA and second language writing research (Ferris, 2012). One of the triggers of the controversy was John Truscott's (1996) paper in which he claimed that teacher-initiated "grammar correction" is futile and even harmful to the students' linguistic development and should be abandoned. However, more recent research seems to imply that feedback is helpful for long-term language development (Sheen & Ellis 2011, p.606) and that certain types of feedback are more helpful than others. For example, focused and individualised feedback with metalinguistic explanations is effective (Ferris 2010). In fact, the discussion and debate on the benefits of error corrections continues lively and no consensus seems in sight.

Another data example relates to Teacher 2 and her warm-up activities before her ESL lessons. Instead of asking general questions about students' previous knowledge related to the lesson for the day, she decided to start her lesson by asking students to report items from the news and she justifies her method in the following excerpt:

(Q: *Your lesson starts with students reporting news items from the radio, why?*) It is a brainstorming exercise, then they [students] get used to learning from the radio [*the good of the method*] and being able to report, they (students) develop the skill of reporting. Listening to the radio is a source of inspiration for writing, they [*the students to whom the good of the action is intended*] should know they can use material from the radio and transfer it to another context...especially after that when I bring in a comprehension topic that is treating that topical issue, they [students] understand it better and they can better relate to it, see the importance to their daily life (T2).

In this case, the value of the reasoning was the help for developing essential skills useful in the studying and learning process of ESL. For example, students should feel motivated to actively participate in the ESL lessons.

From my observations, and from the five teachers' interviews completing the syllabus and the textbook were important and a recurring theme. When asked to elaborate why these were the foci in their ESL teaching and important goals for the language teacher, their justification was the following:

(Q: *what is most important to you as a language teacher? Why?*) Uh...I want to finish the syllabus¹⁷. Because I think that students learn this language because they want to pass an exam at the end of the year and the GCE board has made it that way that we have to finish the syllabus ...at our department meetings they'll [Inspectors/Head of department] come tell us 'how far you have gone with your textbook or scheme'...I make sure that I finish the textbook, I think that finishing the scheme of work is important, you've done your part, the children [students] are apt, you have given them the tool (T4)

I as a language teacher who marks the GCE, I make sure before they get into the GCE my conscience is clear that there's nothing that the students are supposed to be armed with that I have not touched, I make sure I prepare them for the GCE exam, so in a sense there is no way I can say oh! I did not cover my syllabus or I covered 98% No [laughs] (T1)

In these excerpts, the teachers' report that completing the textbooks and syllabus benefit students in preparing them for the examinations. This practice is justified as an educational commitment/responsibility if the 'conscience'¹⁸ is to be clear. However, these justifications can partly be called skills opposite to learning. It also meant that teachers seemed to pay less attention to students' skills and attitude to studying ESL and more to the rules and norms of the school.

8.2.2 Stipulative Premises

In this type of premise, a teacher's justification for a language teaching method was supported by a teaching and/or learning theory. Some of these theories were also formed from personal experiences about different pedagogical elements. In the following example, a teacher states her reason for using the student-centred method as follows:

(Q: *what teaching method do you use?*) A variety, most often than not, I use the student-centred method. I want them to come out with what I want rather than giving them what they need, so by doing that, *I am helping them to be able to communicate, to be able to participate in class.* (T3)

Teacher 3's reasoning is informed by the emphasis on the role of a student as an active participant in interacting and communicating with other students in a Communicative approach to language teaching Brown (2007). However, during the classroom observation of Teacher 3, she did not seize the opportunity to use some or any of the techniques of a student-centred approach. Students had no control over Teacher 3's lesson and she spent more time lecturing to the students. At this point in the interview, I asked a question about the student-centred method

(Q: *what influences your decision to use this method?*) because I realise that they [students] are lacking a lot, I don't know whether the foundation is the

¹⁷ Note that that the scheme states that 'recommended textbooks are expected to cover the syllabus required for each level of a course'. This is of course the textbook because the teachers admit they use the textbook to teach ESL not the syllabus.

¹⁸ The teacher is left with a good conscience when she prepares her students for the examination.

problem, so getting to this stage, *I felt that there's nothing I can do now*, just get them to be more productive in the language than ever before, that's why I always force them to speak. There are times I organise oral composition in the classroom only because I want to get them to speak it so that I can hear what they are trying to say. (T3)

Teacher 3's ensuing justification is not related to her previous reasoning about her students' communication and participation in the ESL lesson, but reveals the teacher's frustration. Teacher 3 realises that her students are lacking a lot and a teacher should control students to be more productive in language. Teacher 3's situation mirrors difficulties involved in the use of teaching methods as discussed in theoretical chapters of the current study. Brown (2007) notes that few teachers would admit to a disbelief in principles of CLT; they would be marked as heretics, however, he warns that teachers should make sure they do indeed understand and practice their convictions (p.48).

In addition, the five teachers also indicated that providing practical examples during the ESL lesson was important for their ESL students. All five teachers indicated they needed to relate their lessons to activities in the daily environment of the student 'football, local markets, music, movies'. Therefore, considering students' learning environment and talking about topics and examples through a practical method is in the interest of the students. For example Teacher 5 explained:

When you make lessons more practical, I give you an example like tenses. You want to teach tenses in form one, past tense. You call a small form one child to perform an action and about a few minutes later, you ask another student to tell you what that child just did. He will not put it in the present tense. From there, you get that particular word that you want to teach. You will start from there. When you make your lessons more practical, students understand better. (T5)

Teacher 5's stipulative practical argument is connected with the level of the students and their development [small]. The student's level of development is, therefore, one reason for Teacher 5 to make her lessons practical. This type of justification is somehow attached to the teacher's experience and to the meaningfulness principle of the theory of learning and her experience in teaching the past tense or form one students, or personal working principles, as Richards (1996) would call them. This personal principle or practice is part of a teacher's personal didactics (Kansanen, 2003).

While the five teachers justified their teaching practices in relation to the study needs of their ESL students, I also observed that the teachers had a common way of justifying general pedagogical actions. Given the significance of teaching the four skills as presented in the textbook, all five teachers shared formal aspects of making the content of text manageable for learning and, to achieve this, adopting a range of actions and justifications. In terms of practices, the five teachers were alert to the teaching of reading comprehension and before teaching they will *pre-teach*

vocabulary, and it was important to research the correct pronunciation of the words in the passage and provide examples before reading the passages.

The teachers justified their language teaching practice with particular reference to how students study—that is, students understand the meaning of new words and also it facilitates understanding of reading comprehension texts. Aiming at researching the *correct pronunciation* is important because the teacher acts as a model and students pronounce like the teacher. All five teachers relied on *lead-in or warm-up* activities before the lessons and their justification was to create interest in the students, allow them to brainstorm and to direct their attention to the lesson. The teachers reported that *evaluation* both in the lesson and more formal tests is justified in that teachers can follow-up the progress of their students and reinforce lessons taught.

A fairly common guiding principle for the justifications of pedagogical actions for the five teachers was to take account of students' previous knowledge and encourage them to understand and use knowledge from texts. However, the principles to which each teacher gave priority and the practices in their classrooms differed, as discussed in section 8.2.1. These shared principles are a set of favoured practices or collective pedagogy for teachers working in similar situations. Breen et al. (2001) found that language teachers of similar experience working with ESL students in a similar situation are likely to implement a shared principle through a diverse range of different practices.

8.2.3 Empirical Premises

This type of premise was called empirical since it was expressed as facts that can be, but are not necessarily tested during the lesson. In other words, a justification could be expressed in the form of statements that can be confirmed or denied using arguments in language research and theories. I observed that Teacher 5 prevented students from using French in her English language lessons, and after my observations she explained her reason for preventing the use of French in her ESL lessons:

All language [English] teachers must strive to encourage students to speak more of English language, keep French aside. You and I know that once a child [student] is able from birth to start speaking English language, that child [student] will be able to write good English (T5)

In the case above, Teacher 5's practical reasoning indicates that the students will 'write good English' if they practice using the language. The students' appropriate use of the target language is, therefore, one reason for her preventing their use of French in her ESL lessons. In this argument, the empirical and testable premise would be 'students will perform better (or become active), provided they are exposed to the target language'. In relation to second language pedagogy, students' appropriate use of the target language has been tested in research. Swain (2000) examined how second language students co-construct linguistic knowledge while engaging in production tasks (i.e. speaking and writing). Her study indicates that students used collaborative dialogue often involving the first language (French) in communicative task in deciding what forms were best to express their meaning.

However, the popular idea that the earlier a second language is introduced in school programmes and language studies, the greater the likelihood of success in studying is also supported by fairly strong research evidence.

Another example of an empirical premise was the presupposition that a teacher had about a particular teaching method. During observations of Teacher 3's lessons, she followed a particular sequence while teaching topics like '*Circumcision, Prostitution, AIDS in our Midst, etc.*' While her lesson was overly teacher-facilitated, Teacher 3 pre-supposed that students should discuss these topics strictly depending on the nature of the exercise, which she interpreted should be 'listening or reading.' She reasoned on her method as follows:

There were certain words in that passage, the main focus was on how you can prevent AIDS but the questions that I asked was able to test them [students] on different words that they heard for vocabulary, simply giving the meanings of the questions that were asked, there are some words that were tested on stress pattern, some on err...syllabification that is finding the number of syllables that are contained in a given word.

(Probe: *do you ask them to discuss AIDS?*) I said I tested it for listening comprehension, if it was a reading comprehension passage, I think their opinion too is needed because with reading comprehension passage there are aspects where you can ask them to discuss certain issues about the text.

(Probe: *in effect you do not discuss opinions?* No, if it's listening comprehension I don't get them [students] to talk about the topic but if it is a reading passage, yes, they need to discuss about it. (T3)

In this case, the teacher has established an assumption about teaching these topics (i.e., students should read a passage and answer questions if it is a reading comprehension passage or listen and answer questions if it is a listening comprehension passage) and based on this belief she expresses her practical argument in the form of an empirical premise: 'If it's listening comprehension I don't get them (students) to talk about the topic but if it is a reading passage, yes, they need to discuss about it'. This is a personal principle or maxim as discussed in section 3.2. This maxim is established based on Teacher 3's experience and personal belief or routine in her English language lessons and, therefore, not necessarily supported by any language teaching theory. This finding is in line with Richard's (1996) study on teaching and the motivations for language teacher's decisions and justifications, which indicated that teachers' maxims appear to reflect cultural factors, belief systems, experience and training.

Maxims function like rules of best behaviour in that they guide the teacher's selection of choices from among a range of alternatives e.g. '*The Maxim of Efficiency: Make the most efficient use of class time*'. As mentioned, this maxim is an outcome of Teacher 3's evolving theory about teaching reading comprehension and, in this case, reflects 'what works' and not the outcome of her ESL students' study of English.

8.2.4 Situational Premises

With situational premises, the five teachers expressed their justification of pedagogical actions in relation to the context in which the actions take place. Teachers' beliefs about contextual factors in and outside the classroom have been found very influential in their thinking and decision making (Borg, 2006). In this study, the situational premises were related to the context of teaching. The most important examples in this type of premise emphasised restrictions in the pedagogical context. As noted earlier, group work was present in only about half of the 86 lessons observed and in my field notes I wrote the following: group work is 10 mins, she moves round but I see no groups, I did not notice the interaction, still, students from groups have to go to the board (group representatives) and write answers, what happened to the others? I tried to imagine how group work is possible in this large classes then I came up with the idea that teachers can photocopy activities may be this will work, my next worry is, will the school provide them? Therefore, in my observation of Teacher 4's English language classroom, she simply involved her students when she discussed topics in her lesson. In the following excerpt, the teacher forms her practical argument based on the number of students in her class:

First of all, our classes are really large, so there are varieties of methods that I would have loved to use. I would have loved to use mostly group work, but it is **impossible, impossible!** (Emphasis) *because of the number of students I have in my class*, so the simple teaching method that I use is interaction, questions and answers. That's just it. I ask students questions, they give me their opinion, at the end; we come to a common agreement. T4

In this case, the teacher is stating a factual restriction (i.e. it is impossible to use group work because of the number of students in my class). She values the student-centred method involving student interaction in groups, but at the same time she justifies her actions by pointing to the class size as a factor limiting her 'pedagogical flexibility'. To Teacher 4, it is a fact that classrooms promoting opportunities for student interaction in T-S-L process is one of the salient characteristics of the Communicative Approach (Brown, 2007; Breidbach, 2011) and classrooms supportive of second language studying create opportunities for more varied and dialogic interactional patterns to occur. However, she believes that in a classroom with a ratio of one teacher to 102–120 students group work is impossible.

After observations and several informal discussions related to such practical challenges in this context, I posed a question related to the support given by the Cameroon Ministry of Education to assist teachers scaffold the T-S-L process of ESL given the large numbers

They [pedagogic inspectors for ESL teaching] come now, they have seminars with teachers to tell us what we are supposed to do, they don't have the students here. I think the better way of doing it is—come to school, *bring in 5 teachers and they sit behind and you the inspector you give us a sample lesson how to deal with these children and their overcrowded nature, then we really see how it works*. You are an expert, so we learn from what you've done, *not*

just theory, theory, they come and copy it on the black board and we copy notes, each time they come, we copy. Eh! We copy, how many times do we really go back and refer and do those things in class? It's not practical. (T4)

Again to Teacher 4, teaching ESL in this context will respond to the best practical method possible in the immediate classroom — teacher-facilitated pedagogy. From her point of view, pedagogic inspectors in the Cameroon Ministry of Education simply present teachers with ‘what works’ theories which seem impossible to implement in the teaching context. According to the syllabus (Order No 1757/D/55 16/3/2004 MINEDUC/SG/IGPBIL) ‘it is recommended to use the communicative approach to language teaching as priority. This does not prevent the teacher from using the eclectic approach when he deems it necessary, provided he gets learners to speak and do things with language individually, in pairs and in groups. Whether he is teaching pronunciation, listening, speaking, reading, writing or vocabulary, the lessons should be student-centred and skill-based (p.24)’. This is what policy demands, but difficulties abound due to class sizes. I put the question directly to the pedagogic inspector and here is how he justifies the possibility for group work:

(Q: I describe a practical classroom situation with 170 students 6 rows and the flow is close to impossible for the teacher to penetrate the class what will be the practical way? How do you organise group work in that class?) we certainly admit that the situation is very very daunting what we do is err... for each 2 benches where each bench you may have about 3 students or 4 students face to face during group work the students on this bench just turn and face the other student and in each group we have a group leader and a group secretary so the task is handed over to the group leader and he controls the way the task has to be performed within the group. At the end of the day we cannot have all reports in one class, sometime we do pick and select them you come up with about 5–6 groups. If you take 5 to 6 groups you are reporting what about 48 students have done out of 100, it's not much but it samples a bit about the opinions of the class. So we have encouraged teachers to work that way so that when they do and they report we can normally think that every student was working during that period (Pedagogic Inspector for ESL teaching)

Hence Teacher 4 values the pedagogically sensible student-centred teaching method, but at the same time she thinks more needs to be done about the large classes if teaching is supposed to respond to students' needs—the kind of pedagogical possibility she wants to see in her own teaching. As experienced teachers, all five teachers do not see it possible to practically engage their ESL students if their class sizes remain so large.

Other data examples pointed to other school-oriented restrictions related to errors from other colleagues

I realised that some of the teachers I can't tell you a lie they have a lot of problems in English language. So if you try in English language as a subject and the other teachers come in and make errors and the students go ahead and

copy, if I have my way, I will take in a lot of English language teachers to be trained professionally (T1)

Another teacher discusses the difficulties involved in collaborating with teachers who stick to textbook methodology

There are some teachers who are difficult to control they insist, *“I want to remain in the same class because I have the textbook, I don’t have money to buy the textbook if I go to the next class....nobody is trained to teach a particular class, we all had the same training and that training implies that we can teach any class, if you have to stay in the same class over the years it makes you dull and lazy...those of us in form 5 when we realise a student cannot construct a sentence, we ask those teaching the lower class what they have been doing, when they come up to this class you expect us to start teaching them rules, they are supposed to be applying those rules* (T3)

Yet another teacher believed that preparing schemes of work was an unnecessary demand because finally teachers will still teach the textbook and not according to the scheme

I’ve been in that school for 13years, every year [mocking in tone] “scheme of work, if you don’t bring it oooh! We’ll kill you”. I have never prepared a scheme of work, and then you ask “if you don’t prepare it what happens?” *So we don’t prepare a scheme of work and then we just still use the textbook to teach. I know okay I have 20 Units to cover for form 3. ...you take your syllabus and cut them into teachable units...you know when you are going to class this is what you’ll teach, but we just use the textbook and we just teach.* (T4)

However, it was interesting to note that according to some guidelines from the document on the ‘New Pedagogic Approach’ (I did not see this document), teachers were required to prepare a scheme of work which some will not do. The Ministry officials informed me that they were preparing new schemes of work. Therefore, teachers were not pleased with this requirement which they considered an obstacle to their ESL teaching instead.

The home-context also constituted another restriction in relation to the immediate classroom

...there is a problem where I teach, for instance 80% of my students are from francophone background whereby they listen to English only in class and after class they do not speak English either with their friends, their peers or at home with their parents. Some of their parents cannot even make a sentence in English so there’s really a problem with communication, that’s why I say they should go back and review the scheme so that children should have the opportunity to have a lot of dialogue in class. (T4)

Most students we have now, their parents have just forced them to do the English section, they have a lot of problems, *the tendency is that they speak English language only in the classroom, there are some of them who go back*

home they don't hear even "good morning" in English, they operate only in their mother tongue or French, we have a lot of problems handling that situation (T3)

Law No 98/004 Du 14 April 1998 on the orientation of education in Cameroon and the Ministerial Decision No 1141/1464 of 28/10/2002 MINEDUC which define guidelines for education in Cameroon states that 'The State shall institute bilingualism at all levels of Education as a factor of national unity and integration', the document also instituted 'ten minutes Bilingual Game', ten minutes of immersion in the other official language. The five teachers seemed to pay less attention to these requirements which they thought was unnecessary:

I know the importance of English language, I know that its only here in Cameroon that French is trying to carry up its small neck, but out of this place, French is zero, nothing, I do not speak French very well, this 10 minutes bilingualism should not affect me in anyway (T5)

Well, maybe the teachers in purely English speaking or purely francophone sections can do that but with us, where students amongst themselves speak only French, I don't see any need for any bilingualism; we are going to devote 10 minutes to teach what? We are already teaching English; in addition to English they speak French so they are already practicing their bilingualism (T2)

The bilingual programme is just for that day of bilingualism and for me it is not workable because I don't master the French very well so I don't even do it, highest is that I greet them in French 'bonjour' that's all, there's no need to teach a grammatical structure in French (laughs) which is going to be taught in English in a different manner, I just play jokes and let it go, I don't bother about it, I don't think it helps (T3)

The other two teachers also said it was difficult to achieve this objective and could not comment further on the ten minutes bilingual game. In addition, the five teachers could not agree on which variety of English should be taught in the classroom, British or American variety. However, it was the case that in official examinations students' essay must be written in British or American variety and they could lose points if they mixed these varieties. However, the pedagogic inspector justified the British variety 'American variety stems from the British variety and the British variety has been regarded as the root of English'. As to their teaching, he reasoned that students should be aware of their differences in contrast to Teacher 5's reasoning that 'when we mark they say when students are inconsistent, it means that the student does not know what they are doing'.

It is clear that if those structures within which teachers' work are not addressed, then teachers may implicitly or explicitly resist or provide technical justifications for their teaching practice. Rather than allow largely self-protective measures to develop and flourish, this fundamental issue should be addressed in the

Education Ministry by the pedagogical inspectors for ESL teaching, well before any syllabus reform is implemented.

Teachers in this study also reported that policy demands in ESL were simply not clear to them and what these meant in practice. They wanted the Cameroon Ministry of Education and the pedagogical inspectors to be clear about its policies and indicated that more collaboration and visits were required to check whether teachers were implementing policies the right way. One teacher illustrative of many others noted:

The inspectors? Are they even serious themselves? I have taught for 22 years and in the same school for 12 years in X city with national inspectors and regional inspectors, I have been inspected once... after the lesson we did not sit together let her tell me the strength and weaknesses of the lesson... is that inspection? There is a lot of loopholes when the inspectors come in, what do they really want? You are coming to inspect that what did you send that I should do that you are coming now to inspect if the application is okay, so if we want to check the system it should be overhauled from the top. (T4)

(Q: it seems to me that most of your lessons mainly discuss examinations, can you explain why this is important?) You first of all have to know that we are working in a system where we are guided. Most often since we are preparing students for exams, its most often exam-centred and they [ministry officials] tell you that students must pass and they evaluate you following the performance of the students in the examinations, so if you start derailing, there is a big problem, because they have what they'll [students] be tested on and you must focus on those things they'll be tested on, leave out others. In the exam class stick to your syllabus, your evaluation. (T5)

According to the syllabus (Order No 1757/D/55 16/3/2004 MINEDUC/SG/I GPBIL), 'learners are considered as active participants in the whole learning process. Consequently, they are expected to develop certain skills and strategies of learning how to learn'. One of such skills as elaborated in the scheme was the 'thinking skill' and as observed in the five teacher's classroom it was not clear how this was understood, as no mention was made about this skill and they for example they explained that :

The inspectors tell us each time that we have to give time to these students to think and speak. That is why you have five minutes for presentation; the practice should take the other 25 minutes where students will now talk, bring out what they know , then you do a lot of interaction with them. (T4)

Maybe they just want students to brainstorm to get a situation and then try to errrr..... predict solutions or to think of solutions to particular problems. (T3)

It's the ability of make the candidates [students] reason on their own... that's why when you go to reading comprehension, there are some questions that they'll ask the candidates that the meaning is not very clear, they'll have to

force the candidate to go some few lines above and come a few lines below the particular word to get the meaning of that word. (T5)

I don't know, I need to know what it means, is it on teachers to teach thinking skills? Well on the part of the students it means they have to think of what is being said on the part of the teacher they think of how to help students concentrate, but I will find out. (T1)

It seems that the teachers were able to practice some kinds of actions but failed to adequately reflect on the importance to their students, though the pedagogic inspector explained that 'the thinking skills comes in when you are thinking of getting your students to be able to solve problems because when you have to let them solve problems, you must have to let them think'. A need for clarity of objectives emerged which is typically recognized as a feature of 'good teaching' because the thinking skill means more than just brainstorming or thinking in relation to reading comprehension texts but involves problem solving, which is one way to empower the language student. From my observation and as mentioned in the theoretical chapters, each course of a teacher's practice and any pedagogical decision have an 'end' (Fenstermacher, 1994).

In brief, it seems that the teachers were operating within a complex, contradictory, uncertain and unpredictable environment that was not new to them. They reported that they were encountering problems related to lack of a detailed syllabus for the subject, selection of appropriate course materials and supervision from Ministry officials and most especially lack of motivation due to failure to implement a special salary status for the teacher. I asked the pedagogic inspector about documents:

(Q: *Which are the documents the ministry gives the teachers?*) The documents? Teachers? In fact the teachers have no particular...**silence**... when you are a teacher you are supposed to buy your course book and from the course book you draw up your scheme of work, maybe errr.... for those who cannot draw a scheme of work the inspectors have provided sample schemes of work which they can follow, apart from that, no other document is given to the teacher by the ministry (Pedagogic Inspector for ESL).

My observations, interviews and discussions with teachers during the fieldwork period revealed that teachers faced many challenges and restrictions, most often in their approaches to teaching—studying—learning and improving studying outcomes; they often lacked the support from their professional context in school and lacked a detailed grasp of what was expected of them in policy and just what they were being asked to do, apart from teaching students to succeed in national examinations.

8.2.5 Interpreting the Results in the Justifications of the Main Teaching Methods of Cameroon Teachers of English as a Second Language

The results of the analysis on teacher's justification of their teaching methods show that situational justifications were the most used. What is revealed is that the five teachers justified over 20 mostly distinct classroom methods embedded within the premises of value, stipulative, empirical and situational proposed by Fenstermacher and Richardson (1993). As discussed in Chapter 4, this was a promising way of categorising the teachers' answers among many alternatives. Also, the five teachers' justifications of pedagogical principles reflected both 'good reasons' and maxims for action. There also appeared to be a particular repertoire of methods/pedagogical actions justified in same way. It may indicate a collective justification on the basis of similarities in training the teachers undertook, supervision from the same pedagogic inspectors for ESL teaching, members of a professional development organisation CAMELTA, which like all other professional development organisations has developed its own current ideology.

In a study of how ESL teachers conduct their lessons and the motivation for their decisions and actions during teaching, Richards (1996) found that experienced ESL teachers in an educational setting in Hong Kong justified their teaching by developing personal principles which inform their approach to teaching. These principles function like rules of best behaviour or maxims, and guide many of the teachers' instructional decisions. The research findings in the current study are in line with the mentioned results. Teacher 3 discussed her maxim when teaching comprehension passages 'students do not discuss topics which are listening comprehension', Teacher 5 also justified her reason for the examination focus 'in the exam class, stick to your syllabus, your evaluation' and Teacher 4 justified her interactional pattern 'it is impossible to use group work because of the number of students in my classroom'. These maxims relate to teachers personal and subjective philosophy of teaching which are generated in and emerge out of teachers' experiences.

The five teachers also mentioned three distinct challenges in the context of teaching (school-oriented, home-oriented and policy-oriented) to justify a method of teaching. It has to do with contextual influences around and inside the classroom. Borg (2006, p. 283) argues that context mediates teachers' conceptions or broadly speaking their cognitions and practice which may lead to changes in conceptions or create tensions between conceptions and classroom practices. All five teachers and the policy maker identified restrictions prevalent in the ESL teaching context, which captured essential aspects of teachers' perception of themselves, the situation in their classroom that served to organise knowledge of ESL teaching.

It also has something to do with what Fenstermacher (1994) calls 'good reasons' for doing something or believing something. In turn, this reasoning shows that an action is 'the reasonable thing to do, obvious thing to do, or the only thing to do under the circumstances' (p.45). The lack of support from the professional context of the school and policy makers created a sense of frustration in the teachers, and they seemed to have the pedagogy of complaint and dissatisfaction with ESL teaching. Therefore, the classroom approaches rooted in textbook teaching,

error correction and teacher-led interactional patterns justified their complaint of pedagogies because they are the 'right' or the best from among a number of poor alternatives.

The results also reveal that the five teachers were focused on completing all units of the textbook, preparing students to pass national examinations which they justified as a requirement from the Cameroon Ministry of Education guidelines which must be followed by all teachers and which are necessary for their evaluation as well. In fact, placing a high premium on student learning according to policy dictates was thus considered the base line for pedagogical decisions. Although student learning is what schools and teaching are all about, Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004) ask thought-provokingly:

Well, yes... but should everything a teacher does be determined by what advances student learning of selected subject matter? What about nurturing a strong bond between teacher and student? What about helping the student to develop his or her own strengths and interests? What about fostering the moral capacities of the student?

Therefore, teachers need not only consider their students as present to learn some academic material but they also need to attempt to nurture the whole personality of their students. It can also be interpreted that the examination oriented emphasis, high stakes testing and test-driven pedagogies resulted in confusion over policy objectives as teachers lacked documents and proper feedback on their pedagogical actions. However, Canagarajah (2005) argues that product-oriented pedagogy when situated in context can be quite effective in developing literacy in English or reveal the critical thinking of the students. He also claims that those who treat product-oriented learning as encouraging a passive and conforming attitude are going too far in stereotyping ESL students.

Canagarajah's (2005) arguments raise questions as to the issue of test-driven pedagogies and how to develop pedagogical practices relevant to the classroom context which responds more directly to the needs and learning styles of students involved. In the present study, the product-oriented pedagogies prevalent in this context meet with limited success in ESL learning (see Chapter 5). Thus, Canagarajah's arguments are not adequate when considering the kinds of justifications that underlie teachers' pedagogical practices in the context of Cameroon.

The teachers in the focus group drew their own problem tree (Figure 11) after discussing some situational restrictions in ESL teaching in this context.

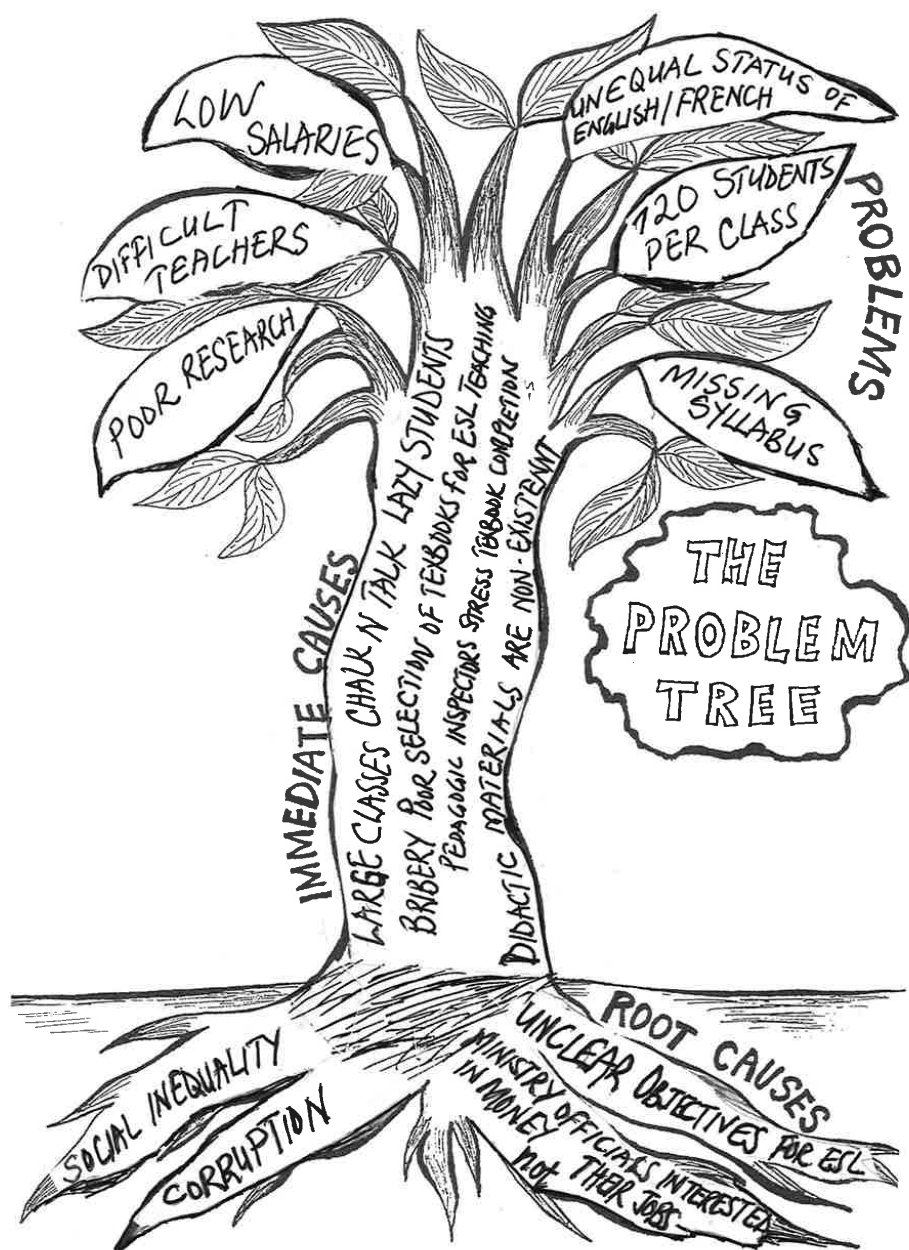


Figure 11. Problem tree diagram of contextual restrictions.

The strategic map will be dealt with in the discussion section of this study (see section 10.2) and the rest of the maps can be found in the appendix.

8.3 Teachers Scaffolding English Second Language Students' Study Processes

This section focuses on the third research question: *In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language scaffold their student' study processes?*

Before I began this study, I assumed that teachers involved would support their students' study processes in very different ways before and during teaching moments in the lessons such as Gibbons (2002) and Many et al. (2009) had discovered in earlier studies in very different locations. I came to this view because I am well aware that supporting students' efforts to understand the content of a lesson seems to be a deep-rooted axiom in many teachers' thinking.

The literature in Chapter 4 (Gibbons, 2000; Van Lier, 2007; Harjanne & Tella, 2008; Many et al. 2009) indicates that pedagogical scaffolding can be planned before teaching and implemented during teachable moments, and scaffolding provided by a real expert, a mentor or a language teacher is indispensable in a second language classroom.

Scaffolding is usually individual-based or small-group based, and well timed. Proper timing, meaning enough support at the right/appropriate moment, is what scaffolding is all about: not too much help when students can cope with tasks, but the teachers' readiness to help if need be. The question of scaffolding was specifically focused on during observation of teacher's lessons when participating teachers attempted to support/scaffold students within the framework of a lesson. During the face-to-face interviews teachers were also asked to explain ways in which they support their students' studying of ESL. However, informal discussions with teachers also provided insights to conceptions of their relationship to students' studying. This section looks at ESL teachers' conceptions and abilities to provide scaffolded instruction.

8.3.1 Scaffolding Students' Conceptual Understanding

According to the data, scaffolding occurred within the framework of a lesson and through attention to concepts (through use of texts, turning to outside sources, analysing textual information) and strategy use (reading strategy, listening, writing and spelling).

Teacher 4 viewed herself as a teacher who helps students understand her lessons and achieve difficult tasks. To Teacher 4, such support primarily occurred prior to teaching as one thinks through which aspects of a lesson might cause children [students] problems. In her earliest attempt to explain her view to such support, she noted:

I think that for Forms One and Two, teachers should not focus on the scheme, when you go to Form One, you discover that there are children[students] coming from primary school that don't even know a(ah), b(beh), k(keh), d(deh), ...the scheme for Form One will not tell you that at the beginning of the year you teach a, b, c, d, but when you come to class, you discover that this children do not know it, you have to go back and start teaching the vowels and

consonants sounds which their scheme for that level assumes they already know

Teacher 4 was very passionate about helping students learn. Her initial lesson focused on a series of reading comprehension passages drawn from the textbook ‘Passport to English 4’ on prostitution, immigration and child trafficking. As Teacher 4 implemented the lesson, she wrote the title on the board and read the passage to the students. After reading, she had students identify difficult words for clarification. Students identified the words *trafficking*, *immigration* and *prostitution* for clarification; she then provided scaffolding for the students. The right-hand column in Table 17 shows what the teacher was doing physically and on language she used. The teacher then went on to clarify how words can be defined and understood in context of the reading passage. The commentary column gives a good idea of how Teacher 4 made sure the meaning of words was comprehensible to her students.

Table 17. Scaffolding textual understanding

Teacher’s words	Commentary
You must not always think that you will get the meaning of words from the dictionary, it is possible to get the meaning of the word in context for example: <i>There is a lot of trafficking in women going on.</i>	Teacher <i>clarifies</i> how to get meaning of words and <i>assists</i> by providing an example of her own.
Who thinks trafficking means traffic jam? What is prostitution? You think it is hotel de Ville?	<i>Prompting</i> student involvement
Look at the word ‘pros-ti-tution’ where do you put the stress? Stress is where more emphasis is placed on a word.	Prostitution is <i>said slowly</i> and with <i>emphasis</i> on the third syllable.
An example of immigration: women who have migrated from other places, they are no longer in their place of origin.	<i>Summarises</i> and clarifies how textual information should be understood.

She introduced the idea that words can also be understood based on their use in the context of the reading comprehension exercise and points to an example so that through this example students could focus attention to the meaning in context. At the same time, she engaged her students in some collaborative dialogue in order to clarify some confusion arising over the word trafficking and traffic jam. Finally, she paid attention to the stress pattern of the words and gave local examples to assist her students in answering the reading comprehension questions (Field Notes, February 15). It is evident that the teacher was building bridges with local examples of the words in the text so that the students were given access to context-sensitive examples thus amplifying, not simplifying, the meaning these words.

Teacher 4’s next lesson included correction of exercises for students in order to review the lesson for the previous day. Teacher 4 instructed the students to exchange their books, and went over it with the whole class. As the students gave their answers, Teacher 4 went around the room suggesting ‘give your own answer’

or 'think of other possible meanings of these words' to encourage students to think of the meaning of words in the passage or find multiple answers to the questions. During correction, however, she became concerned with accuracy 'Does anyone know the right spelling of aviation?' After spelling it on the board, she asked 'how many students got that correct?' She continued spelling each new word that appeared in the passage 'air-hostess', 'inter-continental flights'. She also insisted that students write down the correct answers 'you need to write it in your books, get it right' (Field Notes, February 22). Teacher 4's attempt to provide scaffolding focused on supporting her students' ability to understand textual information. She prompted students to analyse information by having students analyse portions of the text that was just read. Teacher 4's scaffolding processes in all 18 lessons consisted of focusing attention and prompting, techniques designed to draw on and support student involvement.

Teacher 1 also considered scaffolding students in moment-to-moment teaching. For instance, in an early lesson on 'introductions in a directed writing exercise', she began with a review of a previous work, offered examples, modelled correct responses as she discussed her actions and asked students to do the same. When teaching this lesson, Teacher 1 used facial cues, and students' questioning to guide her scaffolding. At one point, a number of students asked for guidance on the completion of a directed writing activity. Realising the students were confused, she re-captured the attention of the class saying 'okay, everyone look at the example of introductions in directed writing exercise we did yesterday' pointing to the guidelines for writing introductions in a student's notebook, she noted 'let's review the points again'. Noticing some students who seemed absent minded she re-focused their attention saying 'stop flipping too many pages it was the lesson of yesterday' and then she continued explaining 'always read through the passage first, write the main points etc'. After reviewing the example, she returned to circulating around the room, supporting the students as they worked. She allowed the students work collaboratively to complete the writing activity. This strategy is the adequate kind of pedagogical scaffolding, as (Gibbons, 2002; van Lier, 2007) call it.

She then called a student to write her introduction on the board after which she asked 'what can you say about that introduction before we correct grammatical errors?' Finally, the students gave feedback and correct the grammatical errors in the introduction (Field Notes, March 15).

In the next two lessons, the teacher planned follow-up exercises. Later in the interview, Teacher 1 noted that the impetus for this lesson format was in response to previous activity and her response underscored her concern for students' language development:

I always have an objective in each of the lessons, at the end of it, I try to find out whether the objective has been attained or not. If not, I do remedial lessons, correction of exercises, if there are still lapses I insist again on that lesson. I can change the examples, and then you go ahead'.

Teacher 1 remained primarily focused on scaffolding within the framework for lessons. She also implemented scaffolding through reading and writing strategies

and she recognised that students could scaffold each other within the context of certain activities. In one of her first lessons in a Form 4 class, she designed a writing lesson that integrated the content of her students' on-going unit on road accidents. The lesson began with Teacher 1 discussing road accidents and asking her students what the likely causes could be. She followed up on their contributions by encouraging students to elaborate with specific examples. Next, she introduced a writing activity 'road accidents have become rampant these days. What are the causes of these accidents, suggest measures to prevent these accidents'. As the class progressed, she then modelled the process by giving examples of ideas for the introduction and she moved through the class helping individual students use their knowledge from the previous lessons or their background knowledge and personal experiences to complete the activity.

At the midpoint of the lesson, she returned to the front of the classroom and said 'I have been involved in an accident, the driver was asleep, the road was also bad, try to think of possible reasons, but remember to focus few points in the introduction.' Turning to circulate again in the classroom, Teacher 1 encouraged students to work on the exercise in groups. As the exercise progressed, she allowed her students to use French, as they clarified to each other and worked collaboratively to complete the activity. Next, she encouraged students to write their introductions on the board and she then alternated between modelling the process by giving her own answers and by prompting student involvement in the correction of the exercise 'what can you say about the introduction before we correct grammatical errors?' (Field Notes, February 25).

Teacher 1 showed responsiveness to her students in order to adjust the scaffolding provided. She also adjusted lessons as a result of previously taught lessons. Analysis indicated that plans were continuously altered in light of students' needs as independent readers or writers. Teacher 1 also made scaffolding decisions during teachable moments in the midst of a lesson as response to students' facial cues and questions. She also noted that she could draw on students in her classes and a careful selection of materials as a source of scaffolding students' development, but had difficulties withdrawing scaffolding at the right time, which should ultimately lead to greater student independence.

Teacher 5 who bubbled with enthusiasm about becoming a teacher is happy to be in school 'I just feel terrible if I stay home without going to school, for every day I go to school, I come back very happy because I know that at the end of my lessons, I always make sure I meet up with my objective'. Teacher 5 focused her scaffolding on the structure of the final examinations in ESL. Her initial lesson was based on composition writing. As she implemented this lesson, she reminded her students 'there is a visitor in class; I have decided to teach you something different today' she writes the topic on the board and continues with a question 'how many marks for composition writing?'. This is twenty minutes into the lesson with her students completely silent and Teacher 5 doing all the talking mostly focusing on examination details 'if a candidate has 8 in accuracy, all chief examiners will look at that script, that script will go to the assessor to see if that student deserves it, any student who earns 2 marks in accuracy will pass' she then continues commenting on students' written assignment 'is this the normal "a" I was taught in the nursery

school' Even when she noticed that her students were completely disinterested in her lesson, she continues talking about avoiding errors in the examination.

She later on introduced an exercise. Teacher 5 then sat while her students completed the exercise after which she asked one student to read her work and she confirmed 'excellent'. Later in an informal conversation, Teacher 5 noted 'if there is one class I rely on for a 50% in English, it is this class, if these students do not perform well, part of the responsibility is yours, maybe the teaching strategy is not the best. Before the examination I do a lot of extra classes and revise sample examination questions to make sure they pass the examinations' (Field Notes, February 26). Teacher 5 realised that her ESL lessons are strictly examination-centred but saw her teaching as important for students' success. Observation of students' attitude, however, indicated that they were sometimes active participants with lots of interesting ideas and questions during the lesson. Many were not only studying for the test, but attempted in-depth understanding of the issues in question.

Teacher 5's next lesson included a reading comprehension exercise plus a directed writing exercise for students to complete in order to review the "Mock" examination. Teacher 5 distributed the reading comprehension passage, gave instructions 'read the passage two times. After the first reading look at the ten questions' while her students worked on it independently. As the students worked, Teacher 5 went round the room suggesting 'notice that reading comprehension demands speed and accuracy, answer the questions you know best and go through the sixty questions, there is no A+, you will have marks in paper 1 to cover composition because if you have 12/40 you will pass'. When she went over the exercise with the class, however, she became more interested in grading issues 'this is how the grades for this paper are distributed 45–55 C, 56–65 B, 66– A' she continued '20 in paper one, 20 in directed writing and 10 in your essay and you get a C grade'. Realising her students were very silent she mentioned 'if you have no questions, I expect that you give me the best in the mock,' and she went on talking about examination grading while correcting student's introduction in the directed writing exercise (Field Notes, March 5). As illustrated in this lesson sequence, throughout the semester Teacher 5 seemed to bounce back and forth in teaching and scaffolding in view of the final examinations.

8.3.2 Contextual Support

As a significant part of their concern, providing a safe supportive environment where students could work and learn without distractions seemed to be a natural part of teachers' scaffolding. All five teachers stated that students have different learning styles and they need to establish appropriate (effective) classroom control and management so that most students can focus on the lesson. According to the teachers, some of the students were active in classroom activities (e.g., asking and answering questions) while others were passive and had a limited command of spoken English. Therefore, the purpose of a supportive environment was to assist these weak students participate and learn in the ESL lessons, else 'nothing can flow because the students just disturb or they go their own way'. Teachers worked to build a community of students through such pairing, hence students felt safe to

contribute to the lessons without fear and interruptions from other students and they were willing to share ideas in the group work sessions. Teachers also talked about specific scaffolding strategies:

In a 1 hour 40 minutes lesson, I vary the lesson, that is if the first lesson is difficult, the second should be easier, e.g. do vocabulary, reading or speaking so that students can concentrate

Look at the students when they answer questions to make them feel that they have done something worth appreciating before you correct them

Always repeat main ideas in the presentation to make sure students have understood the lesson

Let students play with words during the practice to show that they have understood the lesson, also lead students to discover answers

Set clear objectives for your lesson; don't teach words out of context

Students copy the presentation only at the end of the practice exercise to avoid distraction while the teacher is presenting the lesson

Four out of the five teachers sent out noisy students from the classroom in order to make the learning environment safe for the rest of the students. It was also found that teachers supported/supervised students as they worked on tasks during the ESL lesson. They found this to be useful because students 'should learn some English during the lesson,' therefore, they gained helpful insights when teaching their students and focusing on strategies to support their ESL learning. In addition, an open and encouraging tone was considered to be important in creating a safe atmosphere.

8.3.3 Intersubjectivity

All five teachers believed there must be mutuality and intersubjective engagement so that students can fully participate in tasks, as the actions of all participants, i.e. teacher and students, must depend on one another. This is what van Lier (2007), discussed in Chapter 2, points to when he discusses some of the design features of the pedagogical scaffolding. All five teachers spoke of trying to get students participate in group work activities and collaborative writing. They also indicated that students were more likely to participate if they are encouraged by the teacher and their peers. For example Teacher 4 explained that

(Q: *Are there new ways you encourage your students to learn English?*)
uumm...yes. Normally, a lot, we try to come out with a class magazine, you know whereby students make research and come out with interesting stories and we select the best. I taught form 3 and 4 it really motivated students, I saw students coming up with very interesting articles because when we started the year, I told them at the end of the term we will have a class magazine. Then I'll encourage them to write articles and we gave topics, the kind of things they could write about, we came out with a group of ten students, all others

will write their articles and hand to them and they select and read and I'll also read. We discovered that they could write very interesting articles and that really encouraged my students and I really enjoyed it. I loved my English class. (T4)

Here, Teacher 4 reports that she knows her students well and believes being able to support them in a collaborative writing process through research. This kind of pedagogical scaffolding refers not only to knowing her students. It also means that she has a better understanding of the social affordances, which involves working as a group and reviewing peer work. Therefore, Teacher 4 can promote better teaching and study practices and motivate her ESL students. Teacher 4's explanation highlights not only the sense of enjoyment that she appears to derive from scaffolding her ESL students, but also the way that students seemed to respond more positively to her classroom tasks.

Teacher 5 also indicated that she encourages and scaffolds her ESL students' study skills through the reading strategy. For example, Teacher 5 explained:

First of all I encourage them by asking them to read, to take small novels and read. You know, there are some students in Form 5 who cannot read! Form 5... they cannot even read! I take newspapers to school, I ask them to read small portions, I take my time, make multiple choice questions from that small portion and ask them to answer. I give them words to match with meanings, there are times that I use flash cards, something like scrabble, scrabble words and ask them to join them together, when others join them together, I ask the other group to use those words to construct sentences. (T5)

Teacher 5 reveals an acute awareness of the need to provide scaffolding in the linguistic skills of her ESL students. She plans her scaffolding considering the poor linguistic skills of her students and this has actually changed the teacher's expectation of her students and she is ready to facilitate interaction through texts and group work to encourage her students participate in her ESL lessons.

However, Teacher 2 indicated that using English only in the ESL lesson is more likely to encourage her students interact. For example, Teacher 2 put forward that:

I don't encourage them to speak French in class, I myself do not speak French to them, I try as much as possible to make them interact among themselves in English. (T2)

Even though insight from communicative principles of language teaching may be the source of such personal understanding, it seemed that teachers seemed to pay less attention to the support/scaffolding function of students' first language in their study of English as second language.

8.3.4 Contingency

All five teachers emphasised the importance of paying attention to students' previous knowledge. It was important for teachers to check students' understanding especially through questioning and, thereafter, explanation and clarification of concepts. This is a good example of pedagogical contingent scaffolding (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990; Many et al., 2009; Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen 2012) and refers to support that is responsive to a student's existing understanding. Teachers talked about including what students already know when they plan a particular lesson; for example in a vocabulary lesson, teachers considered that 'students use the words consciously or unconsciously in their daily conversations' and in comprehension exercises 'students were already taught techniques of answering a comprehension exercise'. By focusing on open questioning during the lesson 'did you understand the passage? Explain your question to me, can you tell me if there are any problems with this introduction' teachers were provided more information on students' existing understanding which led them to scaffold their students. For example, Teacher 3 checks or diagnoses a student's understanding before she provides scaffolding

Excerpt 1

1. Teacher 3 we have revised what constitutes a paragraph, can you underline the topic sentence, the sentence providing details and the concluding statement?
2. Student 1 it is a short interesting paragraph
3. Teacher3 I agree. So can you underline the different parts?
4. Student 1 Again the man's dressing was bizarre, is that a topic sentence? Or transition?
5. Teacher3 who else thinks it's a transition and not a topic sentence? [**Diagnosis**]
6. Student 1 His trousers were like those of a man suffering from elephantiasis. Jacket was stripped blue, red and black, then he had a hat that suggested he was a comedian...provides details and to crown it all...is the concluding statement
7. Teacher 3 (Underlines the sentence- Again the man's dressing was bizarre) is a transition from the previous paragraph which tells the story of the clown. [**Scaffolding**]

From this excerpt, Teacher 3's use of question (lines 1–4) leads her to discover that the students knew a topic sentence not 'transitions'. This led to her scaffolding (line 7) and thereby the students were helped with exactly that which was not understood yet.

8.3.5 Interpreting Results in Teachers' Scaffolding of English Second Language Students' Study Processes

The results of the analysis indicate that teachers implemented scaffolded instruction mainly within the framework of the lesson. Their scaffolding played out in terms of planned instructional frameworks versus teachable moments, contextual support and all teachers encouraged students and drew on diverse resources (i.e. curricular, peer support,) to provide scaffolding for their students. Teachers were aware that students can also scaffold their peers especially in group work activities. Thus to my way of interpreting it, teachers seemed to equate scaffolding with student-centred teaching. Even though peer scaffolding was possible and necessary, it was also interesting to notice how most teachers tried to control student interaction and communication. As Gibbons (2002) connects scaffolding to temporary assistance, it is essential that students 'take over' the task so that they can develop skills and can perform similar tasks at other times.

Scaffolding episodes also heavily emphasised reading, writing and spelling strategies. The five teachers relied on their sequence as defined by the textbook. It can also be interpreted that this made it easier for teachers to plan their scaffolding before teaching as they continually reflected on what to teach, how much help to give if difficulties arise in the course of the lesson and consequently how to offer support.

Teachers also seemed to make an effort to make the classroom context safe and supportive for students to explore and express themselves without fear of ridicule or interruptions from other students. This was evident students being more willing to express their ideas. However, the classroom management strategy which saw that those who unnecessarily interrupted the lessons were sent out of class to make it easier for other students to concentrate on the lesson did not necessarily support those individual students. Despite that, the result showed that teachers encouraged their students to participate in the lesson and were responsible for showing students the linguistic and social affordances in the context of the school and out of school through teacher and peer support.

According to Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen (2012), contingency refers to support that is responsive to student's existing understanding, and a necessary condition for scaffolding. In the results of the current study, there were indications of contingency to which Van de Pol et al. (2012) refer to. Through the use of questions, all five teachers tried to check what students understand before relevant support or scaffolding. This makes me think that contingency is a natural part of teaching in this context, which teachers can develop further. Even so, I argue that if the teacher has 100–120 students in her ESL classroom, it is easy to grasp that individual scaffolding may never take place.

8.4 Summary of Research Findings

As was discussed in chapter 7, participant observation, fieldnotes, interviews and policy documents were gathered with the aim to establish the meaning of teaching English as Second Language from the views of the participants. Table 18 presents a summary of the research findings in relation to the research questions.

Table 18. A summary of research findings

Research Questions	Summary of findings	Interpretations
1) What are the main language teaching methods of Cameroon teachers of English as a second language?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grammar Teaching through an Executive Approach -Focus on corrective feedback -Focus on examination, and -Conveying knowledge from the textbooks to students 	<i>According to my interpretation, second language teachers are not using the Communicative Approach to language teaching; they do not fully understand the principles or what it means to be eclectic; the lessons are teacher-facilitated and the focus is on grammar and examinations</i>
2) In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as a second language justify the language teaching methods they use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Contextual and factual restrictions (home-oriented, policy-oriented and school-oriented) -Good reasons or maxims for pedagogical actions 	<p><i>-In my interpretation, good reasons and maxims should not go unchallenged. ESL teaching should be justified referring to existing theories.</i></p> <p><i>-Clarification of language teaching goals and policy demands is needed so that largely protective measures/technical justifications as Kumaravadivelu (2006) calls it will not develop and flourish</i></p>
3) In what ways do Cameroon teachers of English as second language scaffold their students' study processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -During lesson preparation and moment-to-moment in the teaching process. -Supportive and safe context -Contingent and intersubjective 	<p><i>Many attempts to scaffold already present in this context. However, teachers need support and follow up with this concept as 'handover' or relinquishing control to the students is challenging.</i></p> <p><i>Individual scaffolding unlikely to take place with the current large (100–120) class sizes.</i></p>

The summary above outlines the core ideas of my thesis and at the same time highlights main issues arising from the study that need to be addressed.

9 Credibility

A key part of any research requires judging the quality of the proposed and conducted study. Attempting to analyse, describe and interpret teachers' pedagogical conceptions is not readily achieved in quantitative studies; instead in this qualitative study, I focus on verifying my findings by answering the question 'How trustworthy is all of this?', which demands attention to *credibility* (i.e. deals with the focus of the research and refers to the confidence in how well data and processes of analysis address the intended focus), *transferability* (i.e. the degree to which the findings of this inquiry can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of the project?), *dependability* (i.e. an assessment of the quality of the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation), and *confirmability* (i.e. a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected) and represent the most prominent qualitative criteria for assessing quality and rigour in educational research. These terms function as the equivalents for internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Creswell, 2007).

Therefore, for readers to be able to assess and decide about the research quality and relevance, reporting must provide sufficient information to estimate the value of a piece of research including the analysis (See Bryman, 2007; Boeije, 2010). In a qualitative report, quality can be judged from the objectives and research tasks put forward by the researcher. Credibility also concerns the empirical part in its totality, and especially the way the research findings and their interpretations are opened up and discussed.

9.1 Credibility of Data Collection and Data

Credibility of the data collected is an important consideration in qualitative research. Credibility of any data is partly dependent on the techniques used. Therefore, before collecting data, every researcher needs to make decisions on the basis of what truly needs to be known. Moreover, several considerations play in the choice of one method/data over the other; for example, the research problem, the personal experiences of the researcher, and the audiences for whom the report will be written. The present study attempted to fulfil these conditions by considering how to formulate the research problems and by reflecting on my own experiences and how theoretical views could be integrated in order for me to be able to identify teachers' main language teaching methods, their justification of these methods and how they scaffold students' study processes to describe; analyse and interpret the data in order to develop a deeper understanding of ESL in SL contexts and, Cameroon, in particular. Though the context of this study was familiar to me, I could not accurately presage what my research will find or what conclusions I might ultimately reach. I felt that the issues with which I was dealing were likely to reflect high levels of complexity. For example, when addressing teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching ESL, I was looking at conceptions and methods which may change over time and in the face of new information. Moreover, my

research is mediated through the personal and professional lives of teachers, so it was important for me to have the means to address the challenges likely to arise when dealing with the 'human face' of the teaching–studying–learning process of ESL.

As to the present study, this calls for attention to the research task (See Chapter 6) and to language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching ESL in Cameroon, their justifications and their scaffolding of students' study processes. In order to describe, analyse and interpret the teaching practices in this context, I observed ESL teachers, conducted interviews and examined documents. Focusing on these different methods directed me during the data collection process. Collecting written documents proved to be very useful, as Creswell (2008) points out that this type of data has merit if the intent of the researcher is to develop an in-depth understanding of a case or an issue as is the interest in the present study. Each document is loaded with assumptions and details guiding the teaching–studying–learning process of ESL and the role of teachers and students.

The obvious way to get insight into the central phenomenon—teachers' conceptions and methods, their justifications and scaffolding in the ESL teaching–studying–learning process—was to observe teachers teach. I spent a relatively long time (February–June 2010) observing teachers' teaching of ESL in their natural teaching–studying–learning environment, in order to adequately represent the experiences of the participants. As to my visibility as researcher in the participating schools, I did not interrupt or disturb the school setting as I stayed long enough in the field for the students to become accustomed to my presence. Credibility of findings can also be strengthened by sustained engagement in the field (Cohen et al., 2007). To attempt to eliminate any observer effects, I relied on multiple sources of data (triangulation). Therefore, after engaging in participant observations of teacher's classrooms and their teaching and scaffolding, I then proceeded to conduct interviews about the issues and events related to the T–S–L process.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the five teachers and during these interviews I asked many open and probing questions in order to mine the teachers' reasoning on their pedagogical actions as deeply as possible. In the focus group interview, I also asked many open questions in order to understand how teachers as a group discuss ESL teaching–studying–learning in Cameroon. In the group exercise where a problem tree and recommendations was designed by the 6 ESL teachers, it was possible to track their level of consensus or conflict on language teaching issues discussed. Multiple forms of data are a positive factor to credibility. In this study, triangulation or examination of ESL teaching–studying–learning process from different angles (Creswell, 2004; Boeije, 2010) from participant observation with interviews, document analysis and informal discussions with teachers prevented reliance exclusively on a single data collection method and reduced the bias inherent in a particular data source.

As to the familiarity of the research context and access to documents, one of the reasons I was slightly worried about before the start of the fieldwork period was if I could possibly get access to the documents I needed. I did discover that, in fact, it took much time to get access to the documents, and I did not lay hands on the

‘New Pedagogic Approach’ document. However, I finally got sufficient data for this study.

9.2 Credibility of Data Analysis

Despite many guidelines available for data analysis, this process remains complex and personalised; neither is the process straightforward. It is quite a task to state clearly how the analysis has taken place; however, this is very essential for readers to judge whether the findings and conclusions convincingly represent the social phenomenon that was claimed to be examined (see Boeije, 2010). The data analysis followed theory in the field, and analysis of teachers’ main teaching methods (see Richards & Rodgers, 2001) and the justification of their teaching methods (see Fenstermacher & Richardson 1993) and scaffolding (see van Lier, 2007) appeared defensible in frameworks for analysis and interpretation.

As explained in Chapter 7 (see section 7.5), the data analysis followed a formal and informal process. I started by reviewing the research proposal to address the needs of the audiences as analysis proceeded. I listened to the interviews and transcribed them in 2010 in order to get an initial overview of the data before analysis. From 2011 to 2012, I read through the data several times, classifying, generating patterns and categories and then working back and forth to test the categories. This was by far the most intensive stage of this research as it took me two years to finally complete the analysis, and during this process I read the transcriptions and listened to the audio recordings in order to enhance the credibility of the analysis.

First I analysed language teachers’ conceptions and their main teaching methods (see section 7.5.1) by identifying and describing teachers’ theories of language, pedagogical design and their classroom techniques. The observation data of teachers’ and students’ activities in the classroom were constantly analysed by comparing with the interview data. When the interview data supported my observation data, I added them to the categories of my study. Finally I made connections between categories. I found that the descriptions of elements and sub-elements that constitute a method as outlined by Richards and Rodgers (2001) were a good point of departure. I followed the same procedure for language teachers’ justification of their teaching methods; the general classification of teachers’ justifications of their pedagogical actions by Fenstermacher and Richardson (1993), was suitable also to the context of second language teaching, accordingly, and adapted their descriptions to my data.

The analysis of language teachers’ scaffolding of students’ study processes was content based and the findings rose from theoretical contributions in SLA. (See Gibbons 2002; van Lier, 2007).

During the two year period of the data analysis, I employed these existing knowledge models to analyse the data and I went through the data several times to develop interpretations. With regard to the classification process, I did not use a peer classifier. However, I do not think that this seriously lowers the credibility of the findings as I checked my classification a year after completion of the analysis.

In order to make sure whether what I had interpreted was a representation of the teacher's thoughts, I tried to get feedback in different ways.

9.3 Credibility of Findings and Interpretations

Credibility of research results and interpretation is very much connected to the question of whether readers can confirm that the investigator correctly understands the social world of participants studied. This presents a challenge not to be too subjective or not to overgeneralise, especially when the researcher studies a very familiar context, as is the case in the present study. I have knowledge of the school context and teaching situation in secondary schools in Cameroon. Such in-depth knowledge may not be an unambiguously positive aspect. However, it alerted me to look at the research data, results and interpretations critically.

In this process, I discussed the analysis and interpretive drafts of the research results during seminar presentations to enhance the reliability of the results and interpretations. These discussions provided a fresh perspective on the analysis process, which made me pay attention to explanations I might have overlooked. This helps to minimise bias and prepares for critique (Boeije, 2010). In one of several feedbacks it was noted that 'There's also the danger of overgeneralisation as you know the research context from within. Please be careful not to include in the research findings anything that does not arise from your research data'. This consists of the special kind of triangulation with peers, colleagues, supervisors which directed my attention to some explanations I might have overlooked.

This also challenged me to constantly consider the issue of the quality of my analytic effort. Another way to enhance reliability of results was reliance on multiple sources of data collected (section 9.3), as well as multiple voices—the voices of teachers, focus group participants, and the pedagogic inspector, and discussions that resulted from informal visits to classrooms and schools. Also, the literal accounts of what was being said and direct quotes from the participants usually reduce threats and provide readers with information which can be used to judge the quality of the research results and interpretations.

The next stage realised in 2013, was to get feedback from the participants asking them whether they recognised the findings and if they judged them correct or if they could see their views in the interpretation. I received comments through email and the participants stated 'I find the results/analysis ok and they reflect my views, all the best.' They agreed that my interpretation made sense and this was the explicit way of checking my interpretation from the participants' perspectives.

9.4 Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability

Transferability is concerned with the degree of applicability of the findings to other contexts. It also pertains to whether the results of a study can be generalised beyond the specific research context. With regard to qualitative research, this is one of the most difficult issues. For research to be transferable/externally valid it is of crucial importance how the sample is selected, and it is exactly this that causes doubts about the possibilities of transferring qualitative findings. In the present study, little attention was paid to comparing the different classes and schools. What

seemed more important was to present an in-depth analysis of language teachers' conceptions of their methods and justifications and how they scaffold students' studying processes and explanations to appearing differences. As stated above, the present study did not aim at transferability. As a research setting, however, transferability may be possible based on the theoretical components. A similar study can be conducted in other schools, albeit the results may differ to some or even considerable extent.

According to Anfara et al. (2000), thick description (detailed, rich accounts of the places, peoples and activities in a social setting) and purposive sampling are strategies that can be built into the research to enhance the quality and rigour. In the current study, descriptions of the culture-sharing group (Cameroon language teachers) provides the reader with what I refer to and can be considered a data base for making judgements about the possible transfer of the findings to other contexts.

Dependability—a parallel concept to reliability is concerned with consistency of measures usually used in educational research. It conveys the idea that if the same phenomenon is repeatedly measured using the same instruments it should lead to the same outcomes, assuming that the phenomenon does not change. That is when reliable methods are being used repeated observations should lead to comparable outcomes. This presents challenges when ethnographic research is concerned because regardless of the methods used, no two research designs can be the same.

My experience as a student and English language teacher in this context made it easier to get into the group investigated. I found it easier to become an insider in the teaching–studying–learning environment of the participants as we could share similar experiences of ESL teaching in this context. This background explains partly how the gathering of data for the current study was achieved and relationship to participants whose social world is interpreted. My role and experience in this context make my findings and interpretations particularly unique and impossible for repetition by another researcher.

The data gathering methods included participant observation, informal discussions with the participating teachers, field notes, individual/ focused group interviews and ESL policy documents. Close contacts with the teachers facilitated frequent visits to schools and an opportunity to gather meaningful information. As to the documents, some could have changed, for example, the syllabus for teaching ESL; also the students from the different classes must have already sat for the GCE Advanced Level examination and, therefore, be excluded from any fieldwork activity.

Additionally, unsystematic errors may also arise as a result of the research context. This is a consideration for every research; for example, some participants may colour their responses somewhat positively, and other participants downplay their answers. The survey researcher ticks a wrong box, and the researcher misunderstands an answer (Boeije, 2010). In the current study, I felt this could be a less serious problem, because I understood the local context, spoke two official languages (English and French), had earlier experience teaching–studying and learning in this context. As an insider, this presented a threat in dealing objectively with the participants and even my interpretations. However, during the fieldwork

period, my *rapport* with the participating teachers resulted in their trust and confidence.

They viewed me as a younger colleague interested in collaborating and giving voice to ESL teachers in this context. During most informal discussions I raised questions and issues they frankly informed they did not think too deeply about. Thus the teachers behaved very naturally, which can be seen as a factor to raise the dependability of the study. The pedagogic inspector's reflections on the language situation also reflect the reality as I observed. Additionally, special emphasis has been laid on explaining the data gathering process and analysis in this study and their place in the theoretical design of the current study.

Confirmability is often determined by considering the objectivity of the research. However, the term 'quality of research' (Boeije 2010, p.168) is preferred because the meaning of the word 'objectivity' in qualitative research can be interpreted in many different ways and, therefore, surrounded with confusion (Patton 1999, in Boeije 2010). The various connotations of the word objectivity can apply either to the alleged subjectivity or partiality of the researchers since they play such a large role in qualitative analysis, or to the subjective knowledge of the participants. In fact, the process of describing and interpreting the data and the social phenomenon as experienced by my participants can be considered subjective, as I have processed the data through self-introspection, interests and relationship with the participants. Additionally, as confirmability pertains to whether 'the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith, it should be apparent that personal values or theoretical inclinations were not overtly allowed to sway the conduct of the research findings deriving from it' (Bryman & Teevan, 2005, p. 150). According to this view, the reader has to draw her own conclusions after having examined the circumstances of the research and to assess how much attempt was made to make the research process more public vis-à-vis my role and position as a researcher in the current study and on the basis of her own experience and situation.

10 Discussion

The present study has sought to describe, analyse and interpret secondary school language teachers' teaching practices and justification of these practices in the Cameroon context. In other words, I wished to encourage teachers to discuss their main language teaching method, to justify the use of their pedagogical actions when using this method in the second language classrooms and to explain how they scaffold/support second language students' study processes.

Previous research has suggested that while most second language teachers claim to be using the Communicative Language Teaching approach, in fact, communicative classrooms are probably still a minority, with most classrooms still teacher-centred and focusing mostly or exclusively on grammar and examinations. Interview data from the five teachers in this study largely echo findings from earlier studies; particularly in the teachers' admission that four skills (Listening, speaking, reading and writing) and grammar is an important goal in ESL teaching. Teachers also wanted to complete their textbook/scheme of work to prepare students for the ESL examinations. However, the conclusions of this study did not rely solely on teacher's informal discussions or interviews. Instead, the credibility of this study lies mainly in the research design that compares the interviews with observations and policy documents.

The research findings suggest that the five teachers were aware of Communicative Language Teaching principles. Through detailed classroom observations, a number of teaching similarities emerged. Those similarities included extensive corrective feedback and obvious frustration with ESL students' errors. Notable similarities were also discovered in the way teachers selected teaching materials for their ESL lessons (textbook). Teacher-facilitated and well-managed ESL lessons in the very large classrooms were also observed with focus on teaching textbook knowledge and content to students. Teachers' claim that in teaching ESL it is important to have in mind the upcoming examinations was confirmed in observations when teachers frequently explicitly discussed examinations and tests in their classroom context. In sum, teaching from the textbooks, syllabus and other learning goals determined by the Cameroon Ministry of Education, in fact, provided a basically straightforward mandate to move some specified knowledge from that source to the students. While this approach raises some questions about the avowed stress of communicativeness, this approach can be argued to increase the probability that more students will learn more of the content than would otherwise be the case (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004).

The results also indicated that teachers justified their main language teaching method and pedagogical actions in ESL lessons by using 'premises'. Four premises (See Fenstermacher & Richardson, 1993) were helpful for gaining some insight into teachers' justifications and reasoning when they used a particular method. The most commonly used premise was *situational*, which means that a method is used on the basis of pedagogical commitments and restrictions in contexts. The situational justifications were found to constitute a sort of baseline on which the five

teachers relied to justify their methods. According to the situational premises advanced in teachers' justifications and reasoning, alignment with ideas in ESL theory was not the point. Instead, teachers argued that their actions are justified if they accord with pedagogical demands and cope with situational restrictions in their context. This accords with Fenstermacher's (1994) notion, according to which 'an action is the reasonable thing to do, obvious thing to do, or the only thing to do under the circumstances' (p.45).

According to this study, *stipulative* justifications were not very common. However, they would enhance teachers' reflective consideration and interaction with theory and practice in ESL. Integrating such theory into extant frames of reference will prevent a teacher from becoming pedagogically vulnerable when tried and tested practices fail to work.

The present study results show that teachers attempted to scaffold ESL students' study processes through various strategies. Teachers made some effort to promote students' conceptual understanding, to provide contextual support and pay attention to intersubjectivity and contingency in the lessons. The finding concerning scaffolding students' conceptual understanding refers to the focus on skills both by the teacher (wide array of reading, writing, spelling strategies) and by students (expressing their ideas and understanding in the listening/reading/writing/spelling strategies). This focus on skills was seen as an important feature of the scaffolding process within lesson frameworks. The finding concerning a safe, supportive environment where students could work and learn without distractions seemed to play an important role in the scaffolding process. With regard to intersubjectivity, the teachers noticed that building a community of students through collaborative writing and group work activities motivated students' participation in the ESL lessons. Engaging students in collaborative writing activities provided some empowerment for students to participate in classroom activities. Thus, up to a point, the teachers noticed they were able to construct knowledge *together* with their students.

The attention teachers attempted to pay to students' current understanding and making a diagnosis through questions that prompt students for more information was observed in their lessons and may have been the key to scaffolding with exactly that which was not understood yet. (cf. Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2012). The importance of withdrawing scaffolding at the right time in order for students to work independently is usually stressed and the teacher's role in promoting scaffolding is considered important. I assume that teachers' awareness of their role in providing appropriate pedagogical scaffolding, by first assessing students' existing understanding and using questions that elicit students' thought, reasons, experiences and opinions, creates a good context for supporting teachers in using this complex teaching strategy. This procedure is in accordance with sociocultural theory, which underlines the importance of students' engagement in studying. It is desirable that teachers are encouraged to scaffold students within their lesson framework and to direct students to both the linguistic and social affordances in their immediate environment. ESL students are capable of benefitting from this scaffolding strategy. Thus, a pedagogical/professional development programme to explore how teachers can learn to scaffold is to be recommended in the Cameroonian context.

10.1 Implications

Based on the data and analysis presented in chapters 7 and 8 of the present study, the following implications can be drawn concerning (1) understanding scaffolding; (2) re-defining the role of the teacher; (3) training, support and vision. These three will be discussed respectively.

1) Understanding Scaffolding

The results of the present study have practical implications for teachers' professional development. Transforming beliefs, understandings and skills into appropriate classroom pedagogy must be of central importance in promoting teacher professional development both in Cameroon and elsewhere. Effective scaffolding has been linked to reflection, assessing students' existing understanding and withdrawing scaffolding at the right time. First, teacher's routines (in this case, their tendency to provide too much support without adequate attention to handing-over tasks for students' independent processing) need to be monitored and, if need be, changed. In addition, teacher educators and policy makers must continually examine and take into account field experiences/classroom conditions as they work with teachers to become more and more attuned to students' needs.

It is probable that collaborative approaches encouraged by pedagogic inspectors and employed by teachers that allow flexibility and consideration of students' understanding and how much scaffolding to provide would better meet the needs of ESL teachers, particularly when the goal of a teacher professional development programme is to develop ESL teachers abilities to use scaffolding in these ways. On the basis of a greatly expanded research knowledge base, programmes have the knowhow how to be responsive to the knowledge, conceptions and experiences that teachers encounter and provide the framework and strategies needed for teachers to develop expertise and understanding of scaffolded instruction. The results of this study suggest that ESL teachers need the abilities to draw upon verbal and non-verbal communicative moves in order to scaffold language students. ESL teachers need to be aware of scaffolding as a design feature and an interactional process especially when the goal of ESL teaching is to scaffold/support students and withdraw this scaffolding when students are able to perform tasks independently.

2) Re-defining the role of the teacher

As discussed in the beginning of this study, the rapid changes in the discipline of second and foreign language research, the ever-increasing approaches and methods in the 20th century and the complexity of language teaching have contributed in the definition of the role of the language teacher today and as discussed in Chapter 3, language teachers need to be equipped with complex skills in order to competently carry out different roles. The traditional talk and chalk role/teacher as transmitter of information or language models cannot meet the challenging current views of what is involved in language teaching–studying–learning. Teachers are required to reason about their practice in theoretically appropriate and ethical perspectives (see section 2.4). It is very clear that the role of the language teacher has expanded very much beyond its traditional boundaries changing the nature of teacher's responsi-

bilities as a result. Therefore, teacher education programmes also need to take into account teacher's extended roles and responsibilities not only as educators but also as being learners themselves. In this study, the teachers concerned did not cite any support systems in place in their school for colleagues to share and disseminate good practices on teaching, discuss and reflect on justification of their methods or scaffolding strategies.

In order to bring about such changes, teachers need the space to examine their own classroom lives and reflect on their own classroom practices in order to reduce the gap between theories of teaching and their actual classroom practice. This raises important questions for teacher educators and education officials. A more concerted effort is needed in designing in-service programmes for teachers in schools to help them pick up the skills and competency in making a better use of resources other than textbooks. Another way is to provide opportunities for teachers to interact and share experiences with language teachers from different regions and countries. This will require schools in Cameroon to be able to invite visiting teachers and educators from other ESL speaking countries, or from countries where the ESL teaching is of a high standard so that Cameroon teachers could benefit from the interaction.

However, in Cameroon's secondary schools, teachers' professional actions and experiences are not given serious consideration as part of teacher professional development. It is likely that a transition from teachers as implementers of instrumental knowledge and skills to teachers as reflective and even transformative intellectuals, would involve something closer to revolution than evolution, at least in Cameroon at the moment. Moreover based on my experience, Cameroon's teachers, or at least those in this present study, have quite enough to contend with and would be resistant to taking additional responsibilities to critique, challenge or ultimately transform their practice. Consequently, how prepared teachers are to assume these new roles and carry out the corresponding responsibilities as teachers and students depends greatly on their training and professional development.

Cameroon's syllabus standards (Order No 1757/D/55 16/3/2004 MIN-EDUC/SG/IGPBIL) demand that teachers promote critical thinking skills by providing opportunities for students to engage in constructing their own learning and knowledge rather than merely repeating what they have memorised 'parrot fashion'. Making this transition is likely to be far from easy for the teachers who may be inured to transmission pedagogies, rote learning and testing by the situational constraints. One solution might be an updated and contextualised version of Michael West's classical book 'The Teaching of English in Difficult Circumstances' (1960).

Here, recognising restrictions involved with the difficult circumstances posed by excessively large classes with a ratio of one teacher to 120 students or more, I am not suggesting that all teachers in Cameroon are trained only for transmission pedagogies and testing, but it is safe to assume that the ESL teachers in this study, and more generally, and those working in the government secondary schools will almost certainly fall into the teacher-as-transmitter of a body of knowledge or preparing students to take national tests. This means that providing and delivering effective professional development which assists teachers in bridging this critical

gap in practice is essential if a standards-based curriculum is to have the effects its designers intended.

A broad range of collaborative inquiry-based professional development models which mediate discussion and learning among teachers including the establishment of critical friends groups, peer-coaching, lesson studies, and cooperative development initiatives have been put forward by e.g., Johnson (2009). These models would enable professional development to 'encourage teachers to engage in on-going, in-depth and reflective examinations of their teaching practices and their students' studying, while embracing the process of teacher socialisation that occur in classrooms, schools and wider professional communities' (p.6). Thus learning systematically *in, from* and *for* practice would ensure that participation in the context is seen as essential to teacher learning, and that, in fact, contextual factors are very influential in teachers' thinking and decision making (Borg, 2006; Johnson, 2009).

3) Training, support and vision

From the data, teachers' beliefs about language, methods and scaffolding invite me to think about the professional development programme. For some teachers, training is a type of support. They do not think that teacher training is enough or that providing 'what works' teaching practices helps them a lot in terms of scaffolding their students' study practices (see section 8.2.4). The implication here is that ESL teachers need to be aware that they, not methods, are the most important factors in promoting ESL study processes. What ESL students need is not just being taught through specific methods, even if they are shown scientifically to be effective, but teachers who are sensitive to the possibilities of scaffolding their students' study processes and directing them to linguistic and social affordances. The integration of teachers' knowledge, practice is, therefore, very important.

The desirability of training on communicative language approach is obvious. The link between training and support on the one hand and vision, on the other, comes from teachers' beliefs that they will further learn how to better justify methods, how to better direct students to linguistic/social affordances and how to better provide pedagogical scaffolding to their students. They will also be given the mental room for reflection-in-action. They need to understand why they should attempt to integrate linguistic and social affordances, for what purposes they could attempt to scaffold students and with what expected benefits. Professional development programmes may help teachers understand, not only how to teach English *as* second language, but also why to do so. The lack of training, and consequently, the lack of support easily results in high levels of frustration. Training may be important in order to give teachers the confidence needed to believe that they can effectively and comfortably do a good enough job in changing their teaching approaches and scaffolding ESL students' study processes. Having a vision and will to bring about feasible change may require facing many challenges ahead. A major challenge I am concerned with is the difficulty in changing the way teachers think and the test-driven/examination system.

10.2 Action Plan for Language Teachers in Cameroon

Without a doubt, teacher pedagogical thinking develops through experience and reflection, and teaching practices reflect teachers' experience and beliefs as was discussed in an earlier chapter (see Chapter 3). Given the test-driven/examination oriented culture, it is hard for teachers not to teach hard facts strictly related to Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills instead of developing students' strengths and interests in studying ESL, nurturing strong bonds between the teacher and the students and fostering students' moral capacities. However, the present research project obviously cannot change the current system of assessment or eliminate the competitive spirit in the school system. The intention of this research is, accordingly, to facilitate the recognition and examination of teachers' conceptions (ideas and actions they use to organise their teaching) and their role in shaping what goes on in the language classroom, as a hopefully useful step in supporting teachers' professional development. I believe there is a real need in the schools and sufficient data to support teachers' struggles in the field of ESL pedagogy.

The formulation of any Action Plan should take cognisance of the needs of the teachers. From the data collected in this research project, I have come to recognise the need for school teachers to receive better professional development via in-service programmes conducted by the Cameroon Ministry of Education and in-depth reflection and theoretical focus on methods at the school level. The interviews conducted in this research study reflected the possible pedagogical issues (see table 19 for summary) which teachers preferred to receive support in, but this information could at best be used as a measure of preference because of the limited number of participants. Nevertheless, the information provided by the teachers is useful in addressing pedagogical issues at a localised level in school contexts. The discussion so far provides an analysis of the status quo of language teaching in Cameroon. While teachers understand the objective of teaching for ESL to enhance their students' intercultural communicative proficiency, most teachers are not willing to increase time in exploring and addressing this need for their students. This lack of commitment from the teachers is likely due to the highly exam-oriented environment the Cameroon students study in.

The teachers are burdened with a great responsibility to maintain high passing rates among the students; hence in a highly competitive environment it is rational for teachers to take a pragmatic approach in teaching to secure a better academic future for their students. Nonetheless, as discussed in section 5.2, the incompetence of students in national examinations (60% failure rates, MINEDUC, 2010) has given a fresh impetus to serious contemplation about future reforms.

With regard to the immediate context of the classroom, there is an urgency and need in helping school teachers, teacher trainers and policy makers appreciate the complexity of supporting/scaffolding large classrooms with a teacher-student ratio of 1:120 students. As reflected in the interviews, it is indeed extremely difficult to teach such a large class and tailor scaffolding to the needs of individual students, and the complexity of this situation provides an escape route for teachers from having a deeper understanding of pedagogical scaffolding. It is not the intention of this research to ridicule the introduction of 'workshops to discuss teaching

of large classes'; it is, however, the contention of this study to avoid reducing teaching to the traditional 'talk and chalk' and transmission of knowledge from the 'knower' (teacher) to the students.

There is also a need for teachers to make an effort to shift from a teacher-facilitated to student-centred, skill-based teaching environment. The in-service training programme would be an ideal platform to introduce theoretical support and reflections on ecological approaches in language teaching and research. This is a difficult transition process because it means losing 'control' for some teachers but they can be successfully 'converted' if they are given the first-hand experience to sit in a student-centred teaching environment and, more especially, if they are up-to-date with current theoretical justifications for these methods.

I believe such theoretical emphasis motivates teachers to self-evaluate, criticize and shift from fragmented teaching of language. Teachers' life/classroom experiences are important in shaping their belief and hence teaching (Borg, 2006). The mandated ESL teaching in Cameroon has in more recent times progressed from the transmission of knowledge to the recognition of a communicative emphasis in language teaching–studying–learning. The memorisation of a list of vocabulary and grammar rules may still be defended as contributing to grasping the nuances of language, but such a method of teaching–studying–learning is no longer sufficient in this new era of language teaching. If ESL teaching serves for transmission of rudiments of grammar, there is a danger in marginalising the importance of the empowering elements in language studying, thus undermining the progress made so far in the English language syllabus development. The hard fact remains that teachers' experiences are not given serious considerations and this lack of reflection-on-action impedes their effectiveness in the classroom.

A tentative idea is to develop pedagogical materials and consequently the curriculum for language teaching in collaboration with language teachers. This may be a happy compromise given the overall macro climate in Cameroon, in terms of corruption at the level of the Ministry of Education in the process of selection of course materials for teaching of ESL. The idea would be to design teaching based on possible desired learning outcomes with a good mixture of theoretical and contextual suitability, all of which will require a paradigm shift in the designing and developing of the curriculum. Nevertheless, whatever form this would take, the fact remains that there is a real need to re-design the curriculum and re-consider the selection of pedagogical materials in language teaching in Cameroon. The voices of the teacher are represented in this table below.

Table 19. Planning the action for ESL teaching in Cameroon

PROBLEM	WHAT TO CHANGE	IMMEDIATE PLAN	LONG RANGE VISION
<i>Poor selection of course books for language teaching</i>	Textbooks should be well selected; that is no favouritism. The books should also reflect the background of the students Teachers should be consulted both at regional and local levels to design course books related to environmental realities of learners	The ministry and particularly language planners should be sent to the regions to canvas teachers' opinions and teaching experiences Textbooks should be changed or modified to tie with the background of the students.	Good course books will be produced and teachers will be committed to teaching what they have to offer Teachers should be directly involved in the selection of textbooks
<i>Overpopulation in public schools</i>	The number of students should be limited say 50 in a class		
<i>Selection of teachers</i>	Selection of unqualified and mediocre candidates at the expense of qualified ones due to corruption Students should be recruited on merit not on financial motives	Ensure effective control during selection of candidates and dismiss fraudulent candidates and officials	Increase measures for transparency and merit-based advancement
<i>English and French are given unequal status in practice</i>	English being treated as a 'second class' language	Publish texts , announcements, signboards (official) in English and French	Ensure both English and French (Bilingualism) are compulsory not only in examinations at all levels of education but also for employment
<i>No cordial relationship between the ministry responsible for education and teachers</i>	Ministry officials more interested in money than their jobs	Ministry officials collaborate closely with ESL teachers and define policy objectives	Teachers must contribute in shaping ESL education policies

This research project has provided a deeper understanding of the overall language teaching situation in Cameroon and especially in ESL teaching. It has also revealed issues in professional development which has led to recommendation of the model in figure 12

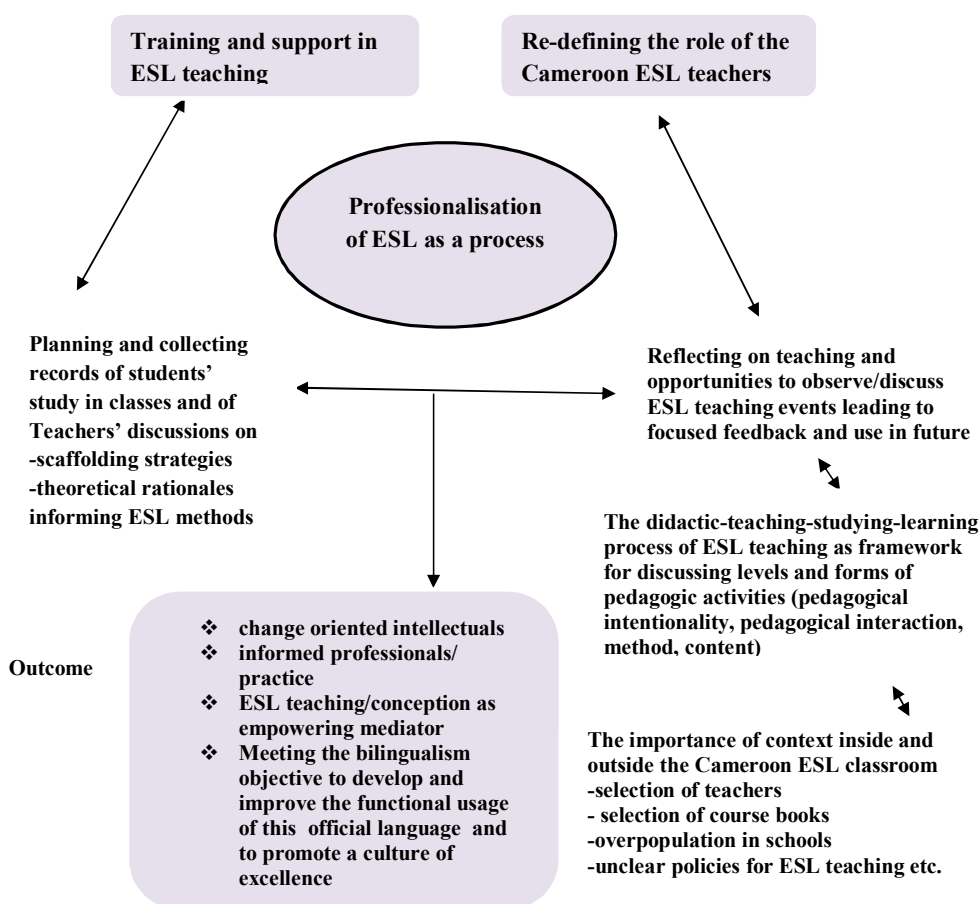


Figure 12. Recommendation of a model to support Cameroon ESL teacher professional development

As argued in the present study, and in the model above, teachers should be encouraged to become more reflexive towards their ESL teaching methods. This implies seeing teachers not only as mere practitioners that execute Cameroon Ministry of Education and GCE board examination guidelines but as intellectuals, professionals and change agents. In that sense it is important that teachers are aware and capable of establishing theoretically informed practices with practical positive outcomes in view. This stands in a stark contrast to current conception of the Ministry of Educations' idea of the role of the Cameroon ESL teacher as stated by the national pedagogic inspector for language teaching

Q: what is the role of the Cameroon English language teacher in the society?
 In fact the role of the Cameroon language teacher is to teach English and to come up with a future English speaking public that can communicate in English and can do things in English that can promote the English language in Cameroon as one of the second official languages and I think the English language teacher has been doing his best to fulfil this role because despite the fact that there are very few of them in the field, they have held up and English is

being taught, **quite a good number of our students are passing exams**, even the adult population is getting more interested

Therefore, there is a real need for professionalisation of English Second Language Teaching in Cameroon and the importance for Ministry of Education officials to become more responsive and sensitive and take action to promote better pedagogical principles and professional development programmes for ESL teaching in Cameroon.

The ideas that I have encountered and learned from the University of Helsinki subject teacher education programme, especially from the Teachers' Pedagogical Studies, (Kansanen, 1995b) include a research-based approach to three large content areas: educational sciences, subject didactics and teaching practice. The good point, in my way of thinking, is that teacher education should link theory and practice in a sufficiently close relationship so that a teacher may be able to resolve everyday teaching problems on the basis of theoretical knowledge. I concur with Tony Wagner who explains in an interview http://www.salon.com/2011/07/18/tony_wagner_finland/ the role of teacher education and teachers in Finland:

They really think about teachers as scientists and the classrooms are their laboratories. So, as I mentioned—every teacher has to have a Masters degree, and it's a content degree where they are not just taking *silly* courses on education theory and history. They are taking **content** courses that enable them to bring a higher level of intellectual preparation in to the class. The second point is that they've defined professionalism as working more collaboratively...

Teacher education in Cameroon is undergoing progressive transformation (Tchombe, n.d), and the recognition that any defects appearing in the programme will have consequences that will be extremely difficult to correct later on, will help improve Cameroon's education system by comparing and learning from others. The didactic theory related model offers a good foundation for this.

10.3 Limitations and Future Research

All studies and perhaps qualitative studies, in particular, need to be aware of the fact that there are inevitable limitations attached to them. For reasons pertaining to the choice of the quite demanding theme, problems in gathering data and limitations due to my being largely a novice in research, I am well aware that many things could have been done better. However, while admitting this and describing the limitations below, I believe that I have been able to make a modest contribution to producing some new knowledge in a topical and important domain.

One limitation of this study is the duration of observations and the small sample size focusing on just five teachers; consequently, any conclusions drawn are tentative. While I believe that my main findings are credible, the limitations of the exploratory and descriptive study have prompted me to think about how methodology in a potential follow-up study might employ a more explicit mixed methods approach (questionnaires, journal diaries etc.) together with interviews to obtain deeper explanations, buttressed also by some numerical data.

Secondly, it is evident that teaching without learning taking place is not effective. Due to reasons mentioned in Chapter 3 of this study (i.e. we should not confuse learning and studying because learning takes place in the head of the student and the teacher can basically only influence study practices), this study aims to describe, analyse and interpret language teachers' conceptions and methods of teaching English as a second language. The research does not address the question of whether the students accept the teachers' methods nor are the teachers' justifications of their methods studied. It would be desirable in a future study to investigate in a similar way students' conceptions on methods of teaching and scaffolding as this is particularly essential for the development of professional development courses to meet both students' and teachers' needs. Despite these limitations, I see this study as a first and useful view of ESL teachers' conceptions, methods and their justifications and their scaffolding of ESL students' study processes in Cameroon, and I argue that these results deserve to be taken into account when educating and planning professional development for ESL teachers.

In the analysis, I found that teachers' justification of their language teaching methods focuses on features of contextual restrictions in teaching and less on value, stipulative and empirical premises, and also the hand-over of tasks during scaffolding episodes was limited. The Cameroon language curriculum requires a change in attitude in promoting teachers' pedagogical justifications and scaffolding in the process of language pedagogy. It is these neglected areas I hope to draw attention to and extend knowledge and discussions about the English curriculum and teacher professional development. A possible strand of future research could be in analysing professional conversations among language teachers and whether this reflection-on-action stimulates innovation or further inquiry in pedagogical knowledge tailored to the context of language teaching.

Unlike many other countries, research work anchored in teachers' reasoning and perhaps it would be useful to an 'indigenous' here ecological/indigenous approaches to language teaching as the term seems to be emerging as a useful one and is not common in Cameroon. Therefore, more research work is needed in the sociocultural dimension.

Epilogue

This has been a truly long journey for me to get this project completed. I was granted the right to start this study in October 2006, I finally started in January 2007 and I had no idea how hard and painful this journey was going to be for me. During the course of the study I have had conflicts and personal challenges that I had to deal with, which increased the difficulty in this journey. Completing this doctoral study without any steady funding has been a constant struggle. Financially, I am able to live on a subsistence level given my annual income as a part-time cleaner; the financial burden is huge, which has caused much stress and anxiety these many years. However, in all these personal challenges, I have learned to be strong and *never* to give up easily. What motivates me is the simple truth of 'never give up on any endeavour if your heart tells you to'.

However, the story of hardships is only one side of the coin: I have gained so much from completing this dissertation. First, I have learned many new things about research methods. Although I had heard about/studied quantitative and qualitative research methods, my previous research was small-scale and focused on literature. I was not, either, familiar with methods like participatory action research, phenomenology, phenomenography etc. Writing the chapter on research methodology gave me the opportunity to re-visit these terms and read many books, which sharpened my perspective on methods.

Although I may have had only somewhat limited experience as a teacher of ESL, doing this research has taught me what it means to become a better teacher and chiefly how to scaffold my students in this age of technological advancements. I have learned to be more understanding and I believe I will be in a better position to use sound pedagogical justifications in my methods. I have learned a lot through observing my supervisor and other colleagues; because I have gained through observing others, this has influenced me to believe that teachers in Cameroon can become better through collaboration and observing fellow teachers at work through in-service/professional development programmes. Focused professional conversations among colleagues stimulate innovation and further inquiry. This spiralling process would culminate in a continuous construction of pedagogical knowledge which is tailored to a particular context and population and which would be continually developed by teachers (Atjonen et al., 2011, pp. 286–287).

There is this old adage that 'there is light at the end of any dark tunnel' I have experienced the pain and confusion of being misunderstood, the fear of failure and even a strong temptation to abandon my PhD journey. In the midst of these trying challenges, I managed to complete the manuscript of this dissertation. This could not have been possible without the strong support and encouragement from my supervisor, indeed 'the firmest fayth is found in fewest woordes'. I have gone through the panic of not understanding to the joy of gaining and developing understanding/confidence. Most of all, I have discovered that his approach taught me patience and trying to keep things simple and coherent. From this experience, there is no doubt in my mind that patience is a virtue. Moreover, I also came to the reali-

sation that in this PhD journey, learning has to take its own course and does not happen overnight.

Finally as I have come to the end of this dissertation and await public examination, I have been stimulated to think of other ways of conceptualising the task I set myself in this research. Two that have come to my mind are verbal and non-verbal communicative moves to scaffold students and the other is ecological and participatory approaches to language teaching. Both could be seen as a move towards professionalising teachers' practice in teaching of second languages and have been addressed by some researchers, including one from the University of Helsinki: *What has Ecology to do with CLIL? An Ecological Approach in Content and Language Integrated Learning* (Järvinen, 2009) a supervisor I collaborated with during my studies, and *using talk to scaffold referential questions for English language learners* (McNeil, 2012). Thus there are several interesting options for any future research efforts I may have an opportunity to undertake.

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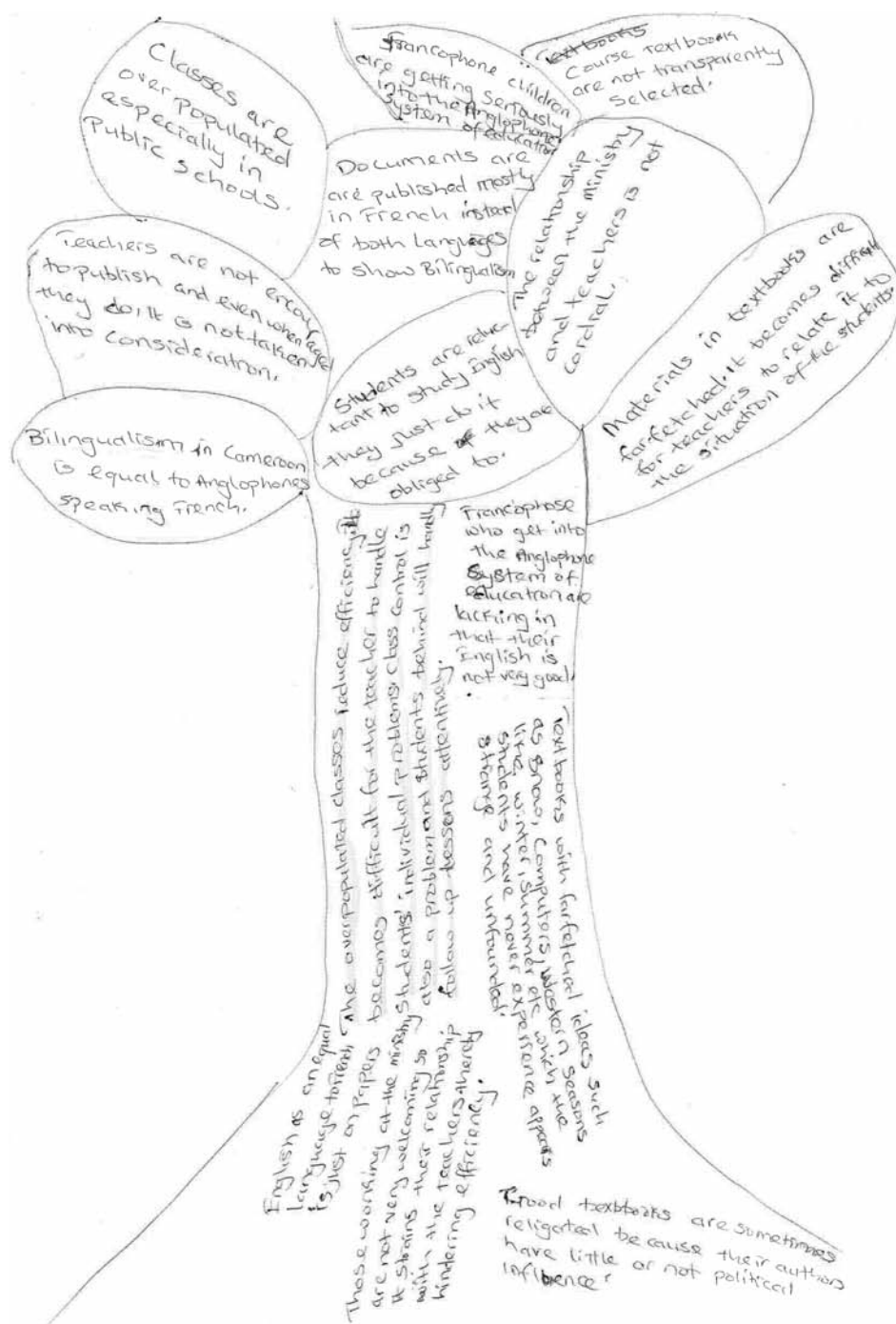
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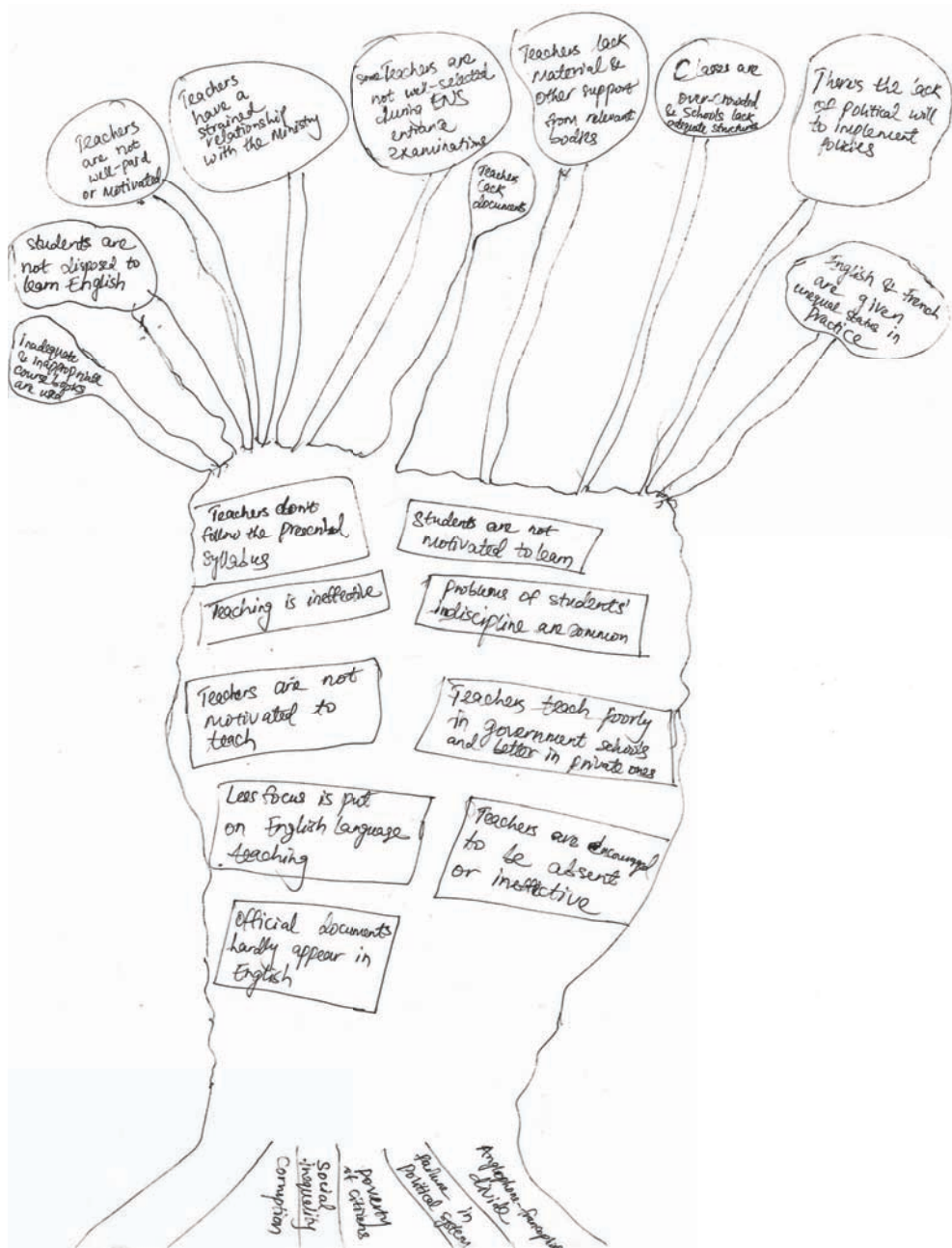
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Appendices

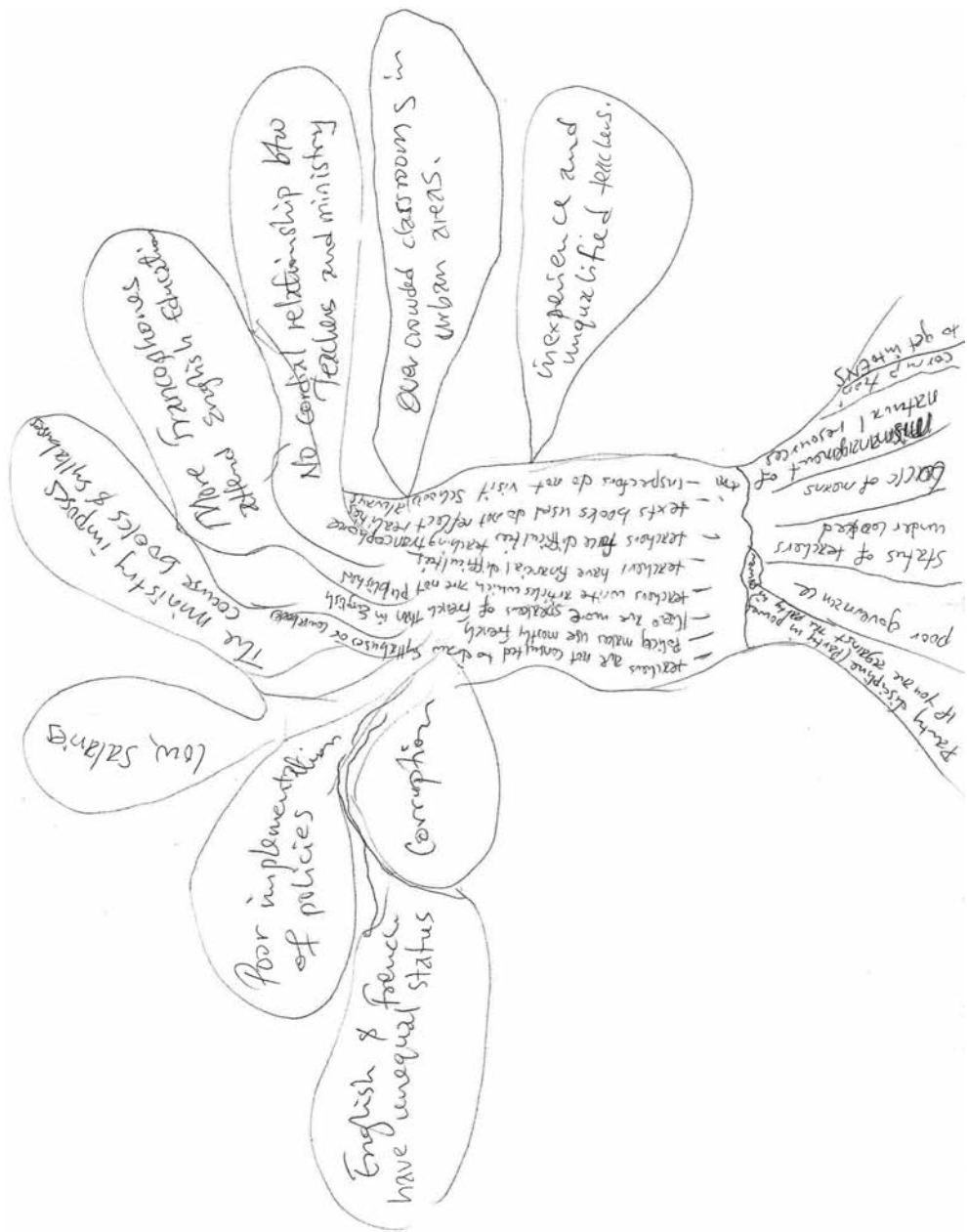
Appendix 1. An example of the problem maps in the focus group interviews and action agenda for change.





Problem	What to change	immediate plan	Long Range Vision
The ministry imposes Course books and syllabuses on teachers	teachers should be consulted at both regional and local levels to design course work (books) which reflect the different environmental realities of learners	The ministry should send planners to the regions and collect teachers' opinions on teaching experiences. - A competition should be launched for teachers to write on what should be done to improve teaching	Good Course books will be produced. teachers will be committed to teaching what they've written
Low Salaries	Improve salary situation of teachers in particular	Government should increase salaries of teachers	Teachers will dedicate much of their time and resources to improve their teaching and well being. The profession will be admired and respected.
Corruption	students should be recruited on merit not on millions.	Government should evaluate students again who get into ENS	Qualified and dedicated teacher will be trained.

Problem	What to change	Immediate Plan	Long range Vision
- Lack of political will to Implement Policies	Change the gap between what is found in the texts and in the field	Make serious efforts (govt) to make sure that official policy is respected at all levels. Organize seminars/workshops etc to revisit such policy & enforce control	Effect motivation and punishment for respect or disrespect of govt policies on education
- Teachers are not well paid or motivated	how salary & support given to teachers	Increase teachers' salaries & allowances	Sign text of application for teachers' status (Etat of state) to ensure enforcement
- Teachers are not well-selected during ENS entrance examinations	Selection of under-qualified & mediocre candidates at the expense of qualified ones due to corruption	Introduce effective control during selection of candidates & demand sanction guilty candidates & officials	Increase measures for transparency & monitoring
- English and French are given unequal status in practice	English being treated as a "second-class" language	Publish texts, announcements, sign boards (bilingual) in English & French	ensure both English & French (bilingual) are compulsory not only in examinations at all levels of education but also for employment



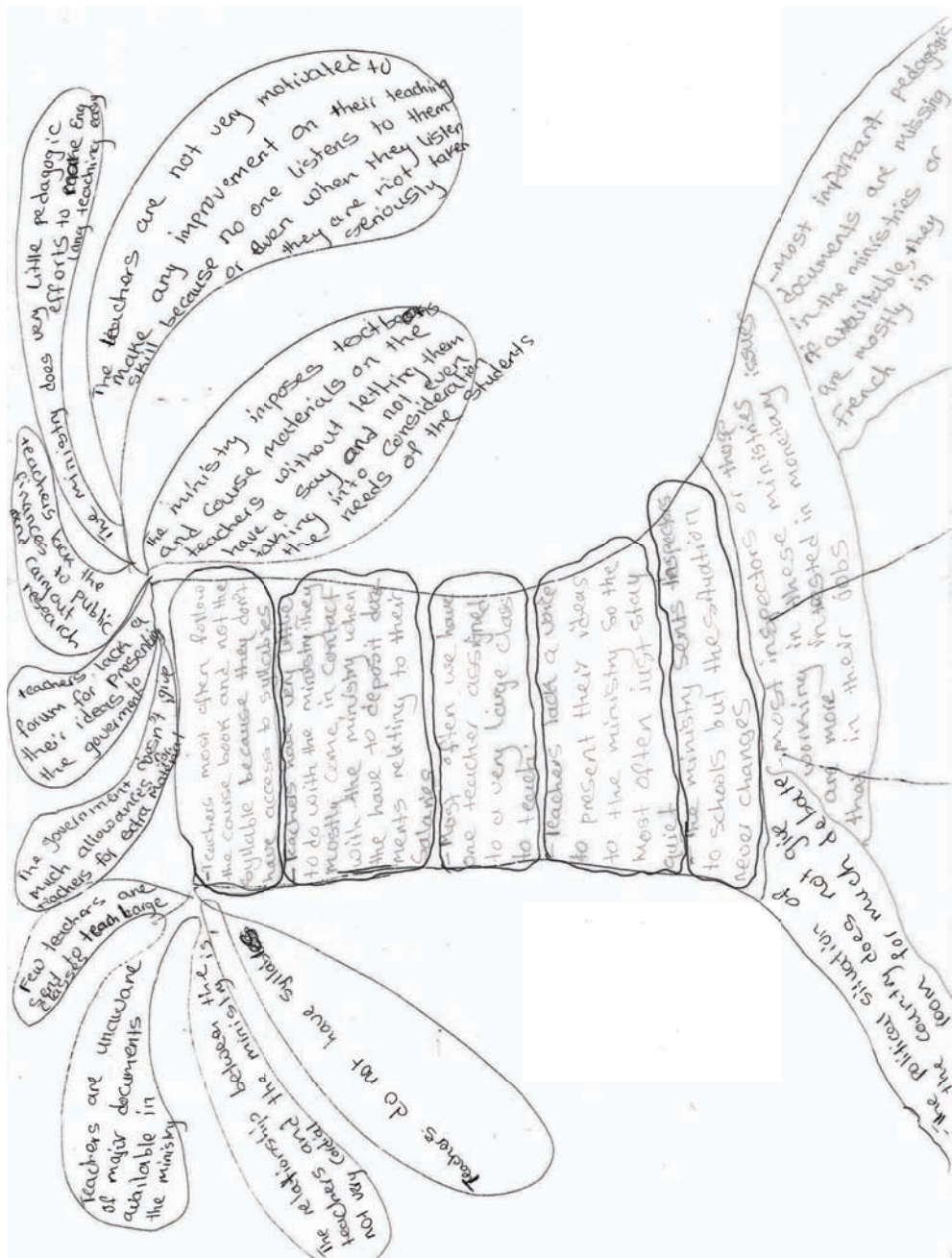
Problem	What to change	immediate plan	Long Range Vision
The ministry imposes Course books and syllabuses on teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers should be consulted at both regional and local levels to design course work (books) which reflect the different environmental realities of learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry should send planners to the regions and collect teachers' opinions on teaching experiences. A compaign should be launched for teachers to write on their what should be done to improve teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Course books will be produced. Teachers will be committed to teaching what they've written.
low salaries	Improve Salary situation of teachers in particular	Government should increase salaries of teachers	Teachers will dedicate much of their time and resources to improve their teaching and well being. The profession will be admired and respected.
Corruption	Students should be recruited on merit not on millions.	Government should evaluate students again who get into ENS	Qualified and dedicated teacher will be trained.



- Teachers work like sheep
- Teachers lack the motivation and the incentive to do their job
- Teachers prefer to put in more efforts in private schools
- Teachers not willing to really explain language concepts to francophones
- Teachers merely asking the students to be reading the course works imposed on them
- Teaching/learning process very difficult
- Teaching that teacher centered instead of student centered
- Working condition very tense and insecure
- Overcrowding
- Creating schools due to political influence

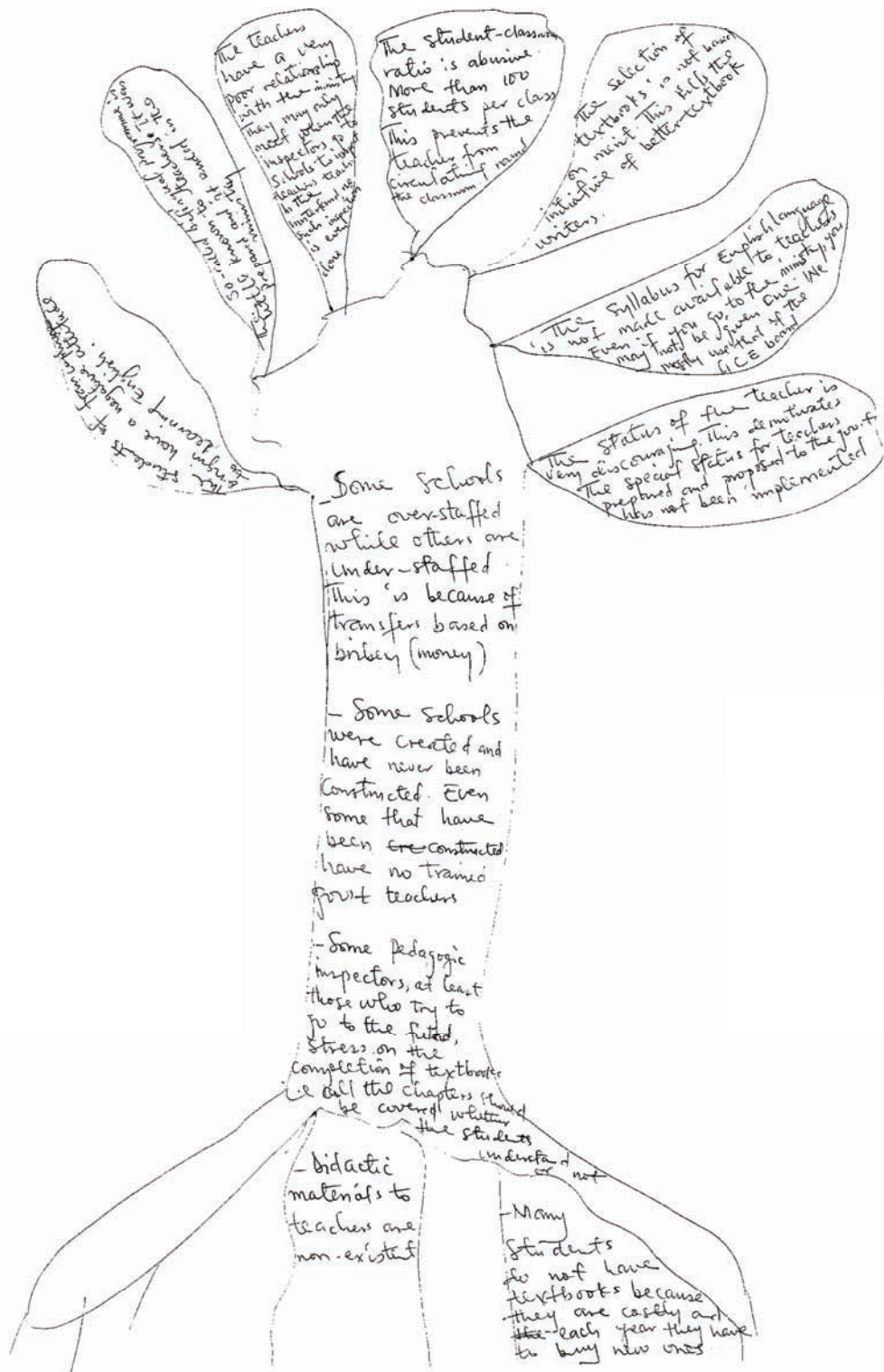
- Political issues
- Complex being endemic in Cameroon
- An elitist and kleptocratic government
- lofty and laudable policies never implemented

Problem(s)	What to change	Long range vision
<p>Problem</p> <p>Policy influencing educational policies</p>	<p>Educational policies should not be based on partisan politics but on the realities that exist.</p>	<p>Classroom will be an obvious place at the heart of education given its centrality will exist at the heart of making educational decisions.</p>
<p>No causal relationship between the ministry and the field</p> <p>Ministry's role in education and teachers</p>	<p>Those in the ministry must go down to the field even if it is the individual.</p> <p>Those in the ministry and those in the field (teachers) should work closely in the field.</p> <p>An opinion box could be open where teachers propose solutions and the good ones are implemented.</p> <p>A practical forum must exist where twice a year teachers on the field in the ministry meet to discuss problems concerning education.</p>	<p>Teachers will no longer feel isolated and they will do their jobs happily and with ease. The results will be gratifying.</p> <p>This will also encourage best work and the output will be very good results.</p>



I think the most important problem is

Most important Problem	What should be done now	What can be done in the long run
<p>① I think the most important problem at the moment is that teachers are not really given a voice or they have no say in making major decisions relating to English language teaching in Cameroon. Eng teachers have no say in course book selections, designing of syllables, drawing up general schemes etc</p>	<p>- I think teachers have to make major efforts to actually impose their voice. they should form small association or unions and make more efforts so that the ministry hears their voice</p>	<p>- Like every other thing, the voices of teachers have to follow a natural course for them to be eventually heard. It is hoped that gradually, the systems of education will change and eventually the voices of teachers will have a place in the designing or course materials, schemes of work etc</p>



Most important problem	What to change	Immediate plan	Long term plan
<p>The most important issue with the teaching of English language in particular and the teaching in general is the issue that of the non-implementation of the "special status" for teachers.</p> <p>This "special status" is a set of reforms proposed by teachers organisations like CATTU, CAMELTA and submitted to the govt.</p>	<p>Unless, the at least, the "special status" is implemented teachers in general will be remain demotivated to do their work.</p> <p>For anything one does, motivation is a key factor</p>	<p>The govt should sign the text of application and effectively improve the conditions of teachers, permit them, for example, to have special allowances</p> <p>- Through transparent elections.</p>	<p>The long term plan is that the entire "special status" of teachers be implemented.</p> <p>If the teachers' self-esteem is raised in the society they will naturally change.</p> <p>Some</p>
<p>- Corruption within the Ministry of education is a concern.</p> <p>The appointment of Principals, Vice principals, Pedagogic inspectors etc is arbitrary</p>	<p>- Good Governance, maybe through the choice of the CPDM regime in power</p>		

Appendix 2. Semi-structured interview prompts for teachers

1. As an introduction, how long have you been teaching? How long was your teacher training? What is your major degree? Why did you decide to become an English language teacher?
2. What are the most important issues in language teaching at the moment? Why?
3. What is most important to you as a language teacher? Who is a good language teacher? Why?
4. What method do you use in teaching English? Why?
5. What does it mean to have a good teaching method or strategy?
6. How do you teach topics in your textbook?
7. Are there new ways you encourage/support your students to learn English?
8. How do you plan your language lessons?
9. How do you teach the thinking skills in the syllabus?
10. What is your role in the English language classroom? Why?

Appendix 3. Examples of observation of teacher's lessons⁵ secondary schools 'A Field Note Excerpt'

School A, Teacher 1

Teacher 1 is standing in front of the classroom. The classroom is spacious with a clear clean blackboard with too much light penetrating from the right side of the room and students seated on this side cannot see the blackboard. There is a teacher's desk in the room and no power sockets hence it is not possible to use an electric device in this room. The students sit orderly in threes and there are 7 rows with enough room for teacher 1 to walk round the classroom.

Teacher's Activities

8.55 Asking about the reading comprehension exercise, did we read about 'The Elephant'? What about Insecurity? Ok let's start with a listening comprehension and you can copy the passage after the first reading

Teacher dictates the passage for students to copy

Teacher gives instructions 'exchange your books with some other person from another desk and correct this exercise using a different pen.

Teacher takes chalk and shows how errors should be circled and -1/2 for each error and the total mark on 20.

Teacher puts up passage on the blackboard

Does Press Freedom Exist?

As said before, press freedom is a universal human right. The problem arises from the question of who should authorize the other to say or write what. This means for a press to be free, somebody must be at the other end

Students' Activities

Students inform teacher they have read these passages

Students copy passage in their books

Students exchange their books with peers from other desk to correct exercise

To sanction it. In addition, there must be another person waiting to assess the degree of Press Freedom. Considering that only world governments can control the different degrees of Press Freedom, the need for, why, this control arises. It would be really advantageous for both a government and its citizens were its press to be free. It is the people's right to speak out reasonably against evil and to applaud good when it occurs. But, this is not the case. Even when the most democratic of nations like the United States of America, Great Britain, Germany and many others are concerned, there is always a certain degree of press control.

Students correct peers exercises and receive feedback from teacher

Appendix 4. Semi-structured interview prompts in focus group interview

1. What is the relationship between language teachers and the Ministry of Education? What is the relationship between language teachers?
2. How does the Ministry support teachers in teaching English?
3. What is your opinion about the current English language teaching?
4. Since you have been teaching, in what types of professional development programmes have you participated? In your opinion, what should professional development programmes be focusing on?
5. Are there any practical challenges of teaching English as a second language? Why?
6. What are some of the everyday problems of teaching English as a second language?
7. What are some of the root causes of these problems?
8. Do you think there can be any immediate or long-term solutions?

Appendix 5. Semi-structured prompts for national pedagogic inspector (after the observation of teacher's lessons and focus group interview)

1. Could you please introduce yourself? How long have you been working as national pedagogic inspector for ESL? Who can become a regional or national inspector for ESL? Is it a highly contested position?
2. What is a typical workday for a national pedagogic inspector for ESL? Any challenges?
3. What are the most important issues in language teaching in Cameroon at the moment?
4. What do you think about teaching methods and which is stressed?
5. What about some of the practical challenges for teachers, some who are inexperienced, coming from teacher education training to meet with large classes in our public schools?
6. If the education ministry organises seminars to teach large classes, do you feel confident that this works in language classrooms?

7. I describe a practical classroom situation with 120 students, 6 rows and difficult for teacher to circulate round the classroom, how do you organise group work in that classroom? Do you think the class size can be reduced?
8. What is the role of ESL for students?
9. What is the relationship between teachers and pedagogic inspectors for ESL teaching at the ministry?
10. As a national pedagogic inspector for ESL teaching, what can you say about the performance of students in English language?
11. Who is a good language teacher?
12. When we talk about course books that are inadequate, does it mean that in Cameroon we lack initiative to write good course books?
13. What is the role of the Cameroon ESL teacher?

Research Report: Recent publications

- 335 Leila Saros 2012. Fyysinen aktiivisuus eri elämänvaiheissa. Yhdeksäsluokkalaisten kes-
tävyysliikunnan harrastamisen motiivit.
- 336 Jenni Stubb 2012. Becoming a scholar. The dynamic interaction between the doctoral
student and the scholarly community.
- 337 Ulla Hotti 2012. Akateeminen opetussuunnitelma innovaationa. Aineenopettajan
pedagogiset opinnot 2005–2008 -opetussuunnitelman toteutuminen pedagogisena ja
didaktisena opiskelu- ja oppimisympäristönä opettajuuden kehittymisen kannalta opis-
kelijoiden kokemana
- 338 Sini Juuti 2012. Piano Musicians' Identity Negotiations in the Context of the Academy
and Transition to Working Life: A Socio-cultural Approach.
- 339 Markku Meriruoho 2012. Keskustelupiirit koululuokan ryhmäkoheesion edistäjinä. Toi-
mintatutkimus eräässä alakoulun luokkaryhmässä.
- 340 Helinä Rahman 2012. Finnish Pupils' Communicative Language Use of English in
Interviews in Basic Education Grades 1–6.
- 341 Sari Mulla 2012. Teachability and School Achievement—Is Student Temperament
Associated with School Grades?
- 342 Sanna Patrikainen 2012. Luokanopettajan pedagoginen ajattelu ja toiminta matemati-
kan opetuksessa.
- 343 Sara Routarinne, Liisa Tainio & Kalle Juuti 2012 (toim.). Ainedidaktiikka ja koulutuspo-
litiikka. Ainedidaktiikan symposiumi 2012. (Pdf)
- 344 Anne-Mari Panula 2013. Lukemisvaikeudet ja osa-aikainen erityisopetus – seurantatu-
kimus esikoulusta yhdeksännen luokan loppuun.
- 345 Johanna Jauhiainen 2013. Effects of an in-service training program on physics
teachers' pedagogical content knowledge: The role of experiments and interacting
bodies in teaching Newtonian mechanics.
- 346 Anna-Leena Riitaoja 2013. Toiseuksien rakentuminen koulussa: Tutkimus opetussuun-
nitelmista ja kahden helsinkiläisen alakoulun arjesta.
- 347 Sirkku Kupiainen, Jukka Marjanen, Mari-Pauliina Vainikainen, Risto Hotulainen ja Jark-
ko Hautamäki 2013. Oppimaan oppiminen peruskoulun päättövaiheessa. Tilanne
vuonna 2012 ja muutos vuodesta 2001.
- 348 Pavinee Sothayapetch 2013. A comparative study of science education at the primary
school level in Finland and Thailand.
- 349 Anni Loukomies 2013. Enhancing Students' Motivation towards School Science with
an Inquiry-Based Site Visit Teaching Sequence: A Design-Based Research Approach.
- 350 Jenna Vekkaila 2014. Doctoral student engagement. The dynamic interplay between
students and scholarly communities.
- 351 Leena Tahkokallio 2014. Lastentarhanopettajan ammatillinen kehittyminen havain-
nointiin perustuvan reflektion avulla.
- 352 Heikki Ruismäki & Inkeri Ruokonen (Eds.) 2014. Voices for Tomorrow. Sixth Interna-
tional Journal of Intercultural Arts Education.
- 353 Mari Helin 2014. Opettajien ammatillisen kehittymisen jatkumo – yliopiston ja koulu-
jen kumppanuus.
- 354 Kaisu Toivonen 2014. Persoonan eettinen kasvu ja kasvatus jälkimodernissa ajassa
suomalaisen kasvatusjärjestelmän kautta tulkittuna.
- 355 Anni Rytönen 2014. University of Helsinki teachers as users and adopters of change
of web-based learning environments in teaching.
- 356 Rita Waye Johnson Longfor 2014. Exploration in Language Didactics and in Teachers'
Pedagogical Thinking. Secondary School Language Teachers' Conceptions and Meth-
ods of Teaching English as a Second Language in Cameroon.